



BEVERLY OSGOOD

OR
WHEN
THE GREAT CITY
IS AWAKE

BY
JANE
VALENTINE

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BEVERLY OSGOOD;

OR,

WHEN THE GREAT CITY IS AWAKE.

A NOVEL.

BY

Jane Valentine.

Nellie J. Meeker

AUTHOR OF

“TIMES SCYTHE,” “JONAS BRAND,” ETC.



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Beverly Osgood.



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BEVERLY OSGOOD;

OR,

WHEN THE GREAT CITY IS AWAKE.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

A TENEMENT HOUSE NEAR THE EAST RIVER.

It was in the early summer of 1892 that I, Beverly Osgood, left my home in a beautiful western city, which lies upon the banks of the Mississippi, to spend a few months in New York, but more especially to visit a college friend at his country seat, "Anlace." It was not my first visit to New York City. Indeed, from a boy fourteen years old, I accompanied my uncle, who was a bachelor, and a wealthy merchant, upon annual trips to the great Metropolis, where he went to buy goods, and make a tour of all the surrounding eastern cities and resorts. I also, while at Cambridge, made many a flying run to the big town.

From the time I could remember, my mother, who was a widow and my uncle's only sister, lived with him, my father having died when I was a babe. We resided in a large double roomy house in the west end, presided over by my mother, and a middle aged mulatto woman, formerly a maid of mother's before her marriage to my father, and my nurse from the moment my eyes opened in wonder to the light of this strange world. At the age of twelve my mother died, leaving me to the care of my uncle, and aunt Lucy, who tried to take her place in

regard to her son, by watching over my material and spiritual welfare. The dear old soul loved and petted me, and I cherished for her a sincere and deep affection, but I fear I often sorely tried her by doing everything but what her idea of a correct obedient boy ought to do.

My uncle at that time was in his forty-fifth year, and must have given up all notion of taking unto himself a wife. I had hoped he would marry after mother's death, as the big house was so lonesome. In the drawing-room, library, uncle's room, and my own, everywhere, I missed my mother's sweet face, and more especially at the table.

On afternoons when the sun drooped towards the west, I was called in from play, and after my battle with Lucy over the bath, and the general set-to, which followed, for Lucy was vigorous and backed up by my mother, I was held with a firm hand, while face, neck and ears, came in for a good lather of soap, and after a douse and a rinsing, I issued forth with shining face, brushed hair, clean hands, clean linen, and my best suit, ready for uncle and dinner.

But some way mother, who had already made her own toilet, managed to have an hour or more before uncle's arrival and dinner, when she would seat herself by the window, with a book of short stories, or her New Testament, from which she would read a chapter, while I sat buried in a big armchair beside her, with my round brown head leaning against its back, one long slim leg, covered with a black stocking meeting my knee breeches, thrown over an arm of the chair. In this position, with open mouth, open eyes, brain active and wide awake, I drank in all she read and said. How her voice so deep and soft, as it rose and fell, comes back to me now, like the strains of some loved melody, kept sacredly locked away in the heart. And when she would raise her blue eyes, moist with tears, from the page, to where I was seated so still, and find me intent and absorbed in what she was reading, she would continue until finished. Then she would lay the book down, and a little explanatory chat, which was the most interesting to me, would fill in the time until uncle came and dinner followed.

These are the dearest and sweetest memories I know,

and are as fresh and green at this writing, as in the days of my boyhood they came and went in sequence, at that happy evening hour. And when I returned from college, I went back to the first twelve years of my life, and the lessons then learned at my mother's side, I adopted and founded the habits, which have resulted in the pursuits of my older manhood. However as this is not a history of myself, but of others, and the scenes and happenings of a great city, I shall be brief.

My uncle and myself were great chums; there was a comradeship between us which seldom exists between father and son, yet I loved him as a father, and no father could show more love for an only son, than he did for me. He gave me every advantage that money could give, sparing nothing on my education. At the age of seventeen I graduated from our public high school, and a year later I went to Cambridge to college, where I spent four years, and graduated there with due honors. After spending several weeks with my four years' friend and college mate, at his country home "Anlace," I returned to my own home and my native city in the southwest.

My uncle left me to my choice of either becoming a business man, or following a profession. At Cambridge I studied law, and for a while went into the office of my uncle's attorney, an elderly man, and a most eminent lawyer. But I soon tired of the dry routine, my nature and it were out of harmony, I began to feel parched, and what little feeling and sentiment I had in my bones, seemed to ooze out the longer I prolonged my stay. I soon found myself drifting into journalism, writing and reporting for the papers; that is, I played at it for a while before settling down to serious work. Before starting on my journey, I thought and planned much about how I would spend my time in New York City, before showing up at Anlace, as I did not intend to give Bertram Arlington but a month at most of my time.

I had made up my mind to see life in the great Metropolis in a different way than Bertram had planned for me; to see it in all its phases, from the life of the hard working honest poor, to poverty in all its depths and makeshifts, its haunts of sin and crime, to the opulent

and plethoric rich. In the world, and more especially in large cities, the evil and good walk side by side, and now more than ever in our modern life. The lodging of the poor honest man, is next door to the criminal, the furnished room of the honest toiling girl is under the same roof with the courtesan, and the woman whose livelihood is the pave.

It was morning when I arrived in New York, the month early June, too early for the people to seek the country, excepting the very wealthy who go to their country seats, with the coming of the first bluebird. I put up at one of the down-town hotels, where I breakfasted. After breakfast I started out for a stroll; the day was bright with sunshine, which added a brilliance to the northern climate which impressed me at first unpleasantly, coming as I did from the soft hazy atmosphere of the southwest. The streets were crowded with people, hurrying and scurrying, edging and elbowing each other as if their very life depended upon reaching their destination at a given time. The elevated steam cars on sixth, third, and ninth avenues, thundered up and down, over the heads of the crowd, while the cable and electric cars, tingled and lingled their bells, as they rode swiftly over the rails. Fine equipages with liveried drivers dashed along Broadway and Fifth Avenue, while others stood with restive horses; in front of fashionable shops, waiting for fashionable ladies. In all this hithering, skithering, satin and silk, velvet and lace-clad surging throng, the ragged and the beggar, were not wanting; neither was the tramp, the criminal, the whiskey soaked, and whiskey wrecked, man and woman.

I had rambled about for some time, when the first thing I knew I found myself in the vicinity of Twenty-third Street near the East river. I had been here on previous occasions, but not with the same purpose which now filled my mind, although it was in a vague and desultory way my feet strayed here. I walked up to Twenty-fourth Street, and turned on Twenty-fourth towards Second Avenue. The neighborhood hereabout is crowded with large tenement houses. In passing one of these working men's hotels, of a grade much better than where the very poor live, my eye was attracted by a placard on one side

of the door of the ground floor flat, "A furnished parlor and bedroom to rent." I shall not give the exact location, suffice it to say, that it is near Second Avenue, and the East river, and not far from the Glen Island steamer landing.

With the passion inherent and strong in me then as now, to see the world of men and women, and study humanity in all its conditions, I stopped and went into the hall door, which was in the center of the building, and touched the electric bell to my left. It was answered by a woman a little over forty years of age. She was below medium height, her figure stout, she had dark reddish hair, and a round wholesome face, lighted by bright pleasant blue eyes, and was clad in a house dress, of some dark cheap material, set off by a long white apron. She scanned me closely, with a certain defiant air of inquiry and suspicion, which seems to be characteristic of all classes in the great Babylon by the sea.

When I told her my errand, she invited me into the little parlor. It was clean and comfortably furnished, and had the usual small bedroom attached, what in the west we call an alcove, for it is nothing more or less, as only a bed and a washstand can find place in it. After a few desultory remarks, the price and so forth, I engaged the apartments. I informed Mrs. Lunis, for such was the name she gave me, that I was from the West, that I would be in New York for some weeks, and I would like her if convenient, to furnish me with breakfast. At first she did not like the idea. "Ah, sir," she said, "I have not wherewith to properly prepare meals for a fine gentleman like you." But I soon overcame her objections, and she agreed to serve me *dejeuner* every morning in the little parlor.

I left her, took an elevated train down-town to the hotel, ordered a carriage, and about half-past five I was driven bag and baggage, to Mrs. Lunis's flat, and took possession of my suite of rooms (closets, I should say). They were the smallest rooms I ever dwelt in. Mrs. Lunis made herself busy arranging my things, and in the general conversation which followed, I learned from her that she was a widow, with one son, whose name was

Eugene, twenty-two years of age. A few months before, I myself had stepped upon the threshold of my twenty-sixth year. Gene, as she called him, had just finished his apprenticeship at the carpenter's trade, and was now receiving full pay. I asked her if her son was all the family she had. She was standing by the window arranging the lace curtains. I saw that she started at my question, and let the curtain she held in her hand drop, then she turned quickly around, her blue eyes flashed one glance at me, which spoke volumes, then she turned to the window again and began tying back the lace curtain with a ribbon. After a pause she remarked in an off-hand general way, which no nationality possesses to such a degree as the Irish or the Irish American, "Now sir, make yourself at home, an' comfortable, an' if you haven't all you need to make your quarters pleasant, let me know an' I will do what I can to please you, that is if your requirements isn't beyond my limited purse. We're poor people in this part of the city sir."

And with that same questioning and puzzled look, and eyes which flashed again into mine, she left the room, and closed the door softly after her. In that glance her eyes asked, who are you, and what are you? And what object has a young man of your station in life, a gentleman, renting lodgings in this poor neighborhood.

CHAPTER II.

NINA PALERMO.

I had been three weeks at my lodgings, and my acquaintance with Mrs. Lunis had so much improved, that the suspicion with which she at first regarded me, a suspicion and fear of something, which her experience of life had taught her, had vanished, and she began to regard me with something of the kind motherly feeling she showed

to her son, Gene. She was an excellent cook, her coffee was delicious, and her home-made rolls equal in lightness and color to aunt Lucy's at home. These were varied at times by light creamy biscuits, and my beefsteak was done to a turn. This inviting repast was placed in the morning upon my parlor table, with a cloth and napkins like snow, and a china plate, cup and saucer, that Mrs Lunis purchased expressly for me. So she informed me one morning as she poured out my coffee, and added with a sly bright twinkle in her eye, "Gene says they were bought for mother's Count, incognito."

I had met Gene, on two or three occasions; the first time, his mother called him into my room to help to move some trunks, then again one evening, at the door, where I had a long chat with him, about New York City. I found that he knew New York, from its center to its circumference, and was born and reared in the very neighborhood he now dwelt in. He was the counterpart of his mother, but an improvement. He had the same dark reddish hair, the same complexion, and clear keen blue eyes. But while his mother was short, round and stout, Gene was tall and straight of limb, but with all the angularities of youth. He dressed cleanly and smartly, and when clad in his best Sunday clothes, was without polish, a comely specimen of young manhood. He informed me that he did all the fine interior carpenter work of houses.

On several occasions before rising in the morning, and of evenings also, I heard in the room which led off my bedroom, the voice of a young girl. The voice was low, soft, and full of varied tones, like the different keys of a musical instrument when touched by skilled fingers. Then again I would hear her laugh ripple out at some utterance of a coarser and more masculine voice, which I took to be Gene's.

One evening after spending the day at the most beautiful, to me, of all New York's summer resorts, Glen Island, and winding up with a good dinner there, I came back feeling a little tired and was seated by the open window, with the blinds and shutters so arranged that I could see and not be seen by those passing by on the street. I had been home about thirty minutes, and reclined com-

fortably in a willow armchair, with my feet perched up on the back of another, smoking a cigar. It was at that time in the evening, when the shadows begin to lengthen, and the gold and purple rays, streaking the horizon, slowly fade into the gray of dusk; the hour when a lull and hush falls over the hustle, bustle, and traffic of the great city, and all New York is dining. I heard in the room off my little bed-room, with just a narrow hall of two or three feet between, and which I learned afterwards was the dining-room, and used as the family sitting-room, the low murmur of a feminine voice, mingled with one more masculine, and which I knew belonged to Gene and the girl. I listened but could discern no other voice. Mrs. Lunis must be absent I thought, or in the kitchen. I rose and walked noiselessly in my slippers to the door of the bed-room, which led into the dining-room, and softly turned the key and the knob, at the same time without making the faintest sound and opened the door, about half the width of a hand, keeping myself well behind it. I could see and not be seen.

Right in line with my eye I beheld a girl, seated upon one end of a sofa, which stood in the angle of the area windows, a girl, about nineteen or twenty years of age. She wore a waist of some soft white stuff, with a full black skirt. The white of the waist, in the dim light, helped to throw out her slender, but full rounded figure.

My first view of her was *en profile*. A sort of a gray reflected light from the upper part of the area window, fell upon her head and face, throwing them in silhouette against the dark background of the wall.

I could see that she possessed unusual beauty. Her hair was jet black, and its braids which she wore coiled high upon her head, were heavy and lustrous. She had that clear dark skin, which is said to belong alone to the Celtic race, but the delicate tints of red, in the cheek, told she was the child of some sunny clime. The forehead was broad, the line of the dark brows straight, and black as her hair. The nose was just a little tipped, giving a touch retrousse, and the small mouth with its full red pouting lips half opened over rows of pearly teeth, which projected slightly, just enough to give a dash of the sensual.

After a few moments she gave a sudden turn which showed me her full face, then I saw that her eyes were large, luminous, and black as sloes, with long inky lashes, which cast faint shadows over her cheek. She raised her hand to her head, to fasten the comb in her hair; it was white and shapely, as was also the foot that peeped out from under her skirt. Gene was seated beside her. He was dressed for the evening, had changed his working clothes, and wore light gray pants, white shirt and collar, and a fancy neck-tie; his boots were polished, and he was in his shirt sleeves.

"Hurry up Gene, and put your coat on," said the girl "and get out of this cubby hole, into the fresh air, I have been cooped up in the shop all day; the shop, the shop," she repeated, rising, and as she did she made a twirl round and round the small dining table which stood in the center of the room. It seems every piece of furniture, has to be of diminutive size for the closets they call rooms in these tenements, flats, in New York City. "The shop, the shop, I detest it," she reiterated, laughing as she threw herself back again upon the edge of the sofa.

"Keep up your courage, Nine, when I get to be a big real estate man, like the boss, the shop will be a thing of the past," said Gene, rising and stretching himself.

"Then I shall sniff at shops, and shopkeepers, and draw my skirts aside, when I meet shop girls on the streets." She laughed merrily, rose up, bent her body, threw back her head, gathered up the folds of her skirts, in her hand, then let them sweep back again with a swirl, and seated herself upon the sofa.

"Won't we have good times, Sis," said Gene, taking two long strides to the chair, where his hat and coat lay, "and if ever I catch any of those upper swelldom fellows ogling you as they do in society, I will draw off and let him have it full in the eye." With that he thrust his arm into the sleeve of his coat, and stretched it out full length, and a fine stalwart arm and hand it was, and I would pity the weakling that got a rap of it over the head.

"Of course you'll carry a cane, and wear kid gloves, when you get to be a big real estate owner." And again

the girl's laugh rippled out like the gurgle of a brook, and Gene chuckled.

"Well, they say my boss is worth about five or six hundred thousand dollars, and he learned the trade of a carpenter, and began as poor as myself."

"In the meantime I shall be shut up in a shop, behind a counter pulling down goods to shoppers, and trying to please them. The most awful lot of women tramps, are old shoppers. I often wonder if they are born so hard and grasping, or if they grow into it as they grow older. Few of them seem to have any pity for a poor girl, standing all day in the sweltering heat behind a counter, for a few dollars a week."

"Come Nina, get your hat on and don't let mother hear you complain like that."

She rose, picked up her hat from the table, placed it on her head and with that Mrs. Lunis came in from the kitchen. "Don't stay late Gene, you know how hard it is to get you children up in the morning."

"We will be home in good season, mother," said Nina caressingly, as she and Gene left the room, and passed out into the public hall. I closed my door softly, stepped into the parlor, sat down and hurriedly put on my shoes, then took from the wardrobe a thin black coat, such as a student might wear; it was one I kept for occasions when I felt in the notion to prowl around at night in my own city. Also a soft felt slouch hat, one I brought from the west with me. I was soon in the hall with my door locked, and the key in my pocket, and went out following after them. I was not likely to attract their attention, as the evening was lovely, and the streets crowded with people, passing and repassing, hither and thither, but I kept them well in sight.

Eugene though but twenty-two, was a fine manly looking fellow, and had the independent air and gait of a city born and bred man. Nina walked by his side with her shoulders thrown back, her head proudly poised, a grace in her carriage, seldom seen a girl, of her age and station, and she had the spring and elasticity of youth in every step. I followed on until they reached the park, which is upon the river bank; here they became lost for

awhile in the crowd. Feeling tired after my day's jaunt, I threw myself into a seat near the river bank, where under the brilliant electric lights, I had a good view of all the men, women, and children. It seemed as if all the big tenement houses, for blocks around, had emptied themselves of their tenantry into this acre of breathing space.

What a medley of human beings. My own city had its slums, alleys, and small tenement houses, but nothing like the vast hoards I saw here, a conglomeration of all nations, swarming upon this small green plat on the river bank. Here was to be seen the East side tough, in all his element of swagger, cigar, and pipe smoke, whiskey soaked, with sensuality marked on every feature of his face, and in every movement of his body. Here also was the crook, in all his makeshifts, with small snake eyes, of furtive glance, low-browed, keen sharpened features, tallow skin, a cigar in his mouth, and wearing good clothes. There also was to be seen the courtesan in the lower walks of life, well dressed, clothes fitting perfectly, large-handed, coarse-featured, a face that might be called handsome if not so marked with dissipation. There were stout women, fat women, slovenly and dowdy women, with children hanging to their skirts. A sprinkling of clean comfortable looking women, of the Mrs. Lunis type, with shirt waists, and black skirts. Young shop girls, factory girls, with that bold defiant air and hard expression of face which one observes in the women here, and which strikes the man of thought with repugnance.

The sight of these young girls, and older women, with their leering bold painted faces, the young grown old in cunning, craft, and sensuality, all the girl and woman blotted out of them, made me shiver as with ague. By what circumstances did they fall so low? Whose hand did the destructive work, I asked myself. Was it the foreigner sitting on the bench to my right in company with those two large loud-looking women, with his blue smock shirt, his pipe in his mouth, his whiskey breath, and large sensual features, a mate perhaps on some steamer plying the East river, or was it that young stalwart hoodlum, or the old debauché to my left, sitting with those three girls, one of them scarcely out of her teens?

Or that big white-handed tough, with his pockets full of money ?—There is no answer but my own solution, as the crowd walks to and fro, laughing and chatting, while pale children whine and whimper, and tug at their mothers' breasts, followed by ragged, hungry, vicious children, their voices mingling with the harsher laughter of men and women. All around me was the hoarse roar of the city, the puff, puff, and snort of the engines, as the trains thundered up and down over the elevated roads. The ding and ling, of the cable cars, and the rattling of carriages, over the stone-paved streets, all mingled together, until their harshness was lost upon the air, and came back again upon the ear, in a jingle of harmonious sounds. I turned my eyes upon the river, which alone was placid and peaceful, with just a soft lip and lap, against the shore. On the opposite bank, the lights glittered, and flickered upon the surface of the water. To my left lay Blackwell's Island, and farther off I could see the American postal service building, where the stars and stripes, in the evening breeze, made one think of an eagle, in the dark, with its pinions outstretched, sailing under the blue jewelled sky. All these islands, lay in the shadow of the night, looking like cities built in the sea.

I rose from my seat, and was leaving the park, when on the way, I met Gene and Nina, face to face " You here, Mr Osgood," said Gene. " I thought you wouldn't care to come to our riverside resort. While of course it's not like Central Park, or Glen Island, the people around here enjoy it, the women can visit, and there is a nice cool breeze from the river." And Gene's blue eyes twinkled merrily. " This is my sister, Miss Lunis Palermo." Nina raised to me those great dark eyes of hers, full of light, innocence, and intelligence, and her face had not only marked beauty, but it was of a rare and pure kind.

In the weeks of my stay with the Lunis's, I learned from Mrs. Lunis, that Nina was not her own daughter, but an adopted child. Nina's mother was of Irish parentage, born in one of the suburban towns which surround New York City. At the age of twenty years, she came to the city, her father and mother having died a few years before. Like many other country girls, she

made her way to the great Metropolis, to seek employment and better her condition, if possible. She made her home for a while with Mrs. Lunis, the parents of both women being old friends. After a stay of several weeks, and failing to find what she wanted in the way of some genteel position, she engaged in a large fashionable restaurant for gentlemen and ladies.

There was a poor Italian gentleman, an exile from his own sunny land, and in hard luck like herself, who came to this restaurant every day towards five o'clock, for dinner. Nance O'Neil, was a proud high-minded honest girl, but she took particular pains to wait on the handsome Italian, who was about thirty-five years old, as dark as she was fair and comely, and had eyes like midnight. He fell in love with Nance O'Neil, and she with him, and one day they were married. Nance, said Mrs. Lunis, was a proud and virtuous girl, and would listen to nothing but marriage.

After their marriage, they rented a small flat, which Nance made comfortable by the money she had saved. She was an intelligent thrifty girl, and the Count, for such he was, but no one knew his rank at that time, not even his wife, followed his profession of teaching the languages, Spanish, French, and his own native tongue, Italian, to private pupils. They had been married about a year, when a baby girl was born to them, and the father idolized her, for she was the very image of himself. When Nina was about two years old, the Count received word from Paris, that his father, the old Count who lived there in exile, had died. He was the eldest son, but the government had confiscated his father's estates of which he was now the heir. He felt all was lost. The King was angry with his father, and he would never recall his son to his country and his home. Hope and spirit seemed to fail him, and with it his grip on life.

In a few months he was taken ill unto death. The day before he died, a large package of papers with a seal, and Italy's coat-of-arms, came by mail to the Count. He opened and read, folded them up and handed them to his wife, saying, "It's too late, keep them for the child, they may be of use to her some day." That was all, he made no further

comment, the next day he passed away, and the light of Nance Palermo's life went out when her noble husband's eyes closed in death, for she loved him. It was one of those occurrences where two people of different nationalities, and widely different spheres of life, are perfectly mated. Mrs. Lunis said he was so kind, gentle, and loving to her, that even the little Nina, could not rouse her from her grief at his loss. Nina's mother struggled on for about three years, when one day, she came to Mrs. Lunis's apartments, with the child. She was very ill, and said to her friend, that she felt she was going to die, and that she wanted her to take Nina, and rear her as her own; she would die happy then knowing she was safe with her. She turned over to Mrs. Lunis, all her personal belongings, and the package of papers given her by her husband, and told her to keep them for Nina, until she was of age. Nina could then see for herself, if they were of importance in claiming anything of her father's inheritance. After a few weeks' illness through which Mrs. Lunis nursed her, the handsome Nance O'Neil, Mrs. Palermo, died, not knowing she was the Countess Palermo.

This happened some years before Mrs. Lunis became a widow. Gene was then nine years old, and side by side, he and the little Nina grew up together as brother and sister, Mrs. Lunis, and her husband showing no difference in their affection towards the two children. "Indade," said Mrs. Lunis in her broad accent, "Nina got all the petting from meself an' husband; even Gene, from a little fellow up, petted and loved her more than any brother."

I met Nina several times during my stay with the Lunis's. After their tea, I would drop into the sitting-room, and in my free western way, have a pleasant chat, setting them at their ease with my simple, kindly manner. I found Gene a manly fellow, although belonging to the class whose advantages, and time for culture, are slim, or else they are not much concerned about the niceties, or what that much abused word, "culture," means. But he had all the instincts of a gentleman, was honest, keen, and intelligent, and showed good nature towards me. He

must have set me apart, as not one of those "swell fellows" I heard him mention in his chaff with his sister, the evening I played spy and eaves-dropper, that he was going to punch in the eye, if he caught any of them ogling her. But just the reverse, I seemed to have little by little, gained his confidence and respect.

I do not claim here that I was a paragon, or blessed with the resistance of a Joseph, or when I came into Nina's presence, my heart didn't thump at sight of her perfect figure, and great beauty of face, as well as wealth of mind still undeveloped. And to say that I was not charmed with her light chit chat, fascinating ways, and a certain saucy dash, would be to make myself out a clod, and a boor.

I was not a bad looking fellow, nor was I vain enough, to think that Nina would have fallen in love with me, had I shown her any marked attention. She was full of life, ambitious, fond of dress and pleasure, and just at the age when the world is bright and fair to a girl, and her mind is full of dreams of great future possibilities. But I had not only inherited from my father, and ancestors, the highest sense of honor, but had it instilled in me by my dear mother, from a child up, and my uncle who never lost an opportunity of holding up to me what he called a fine sense of honor. "Cultivate a fine sense of honor, Beverly, and you will have all the other manly qualities requisite." I was bound by this sense of honor, not to bring trouble into this simple and honest family. On three occasions, I took Nina, Gene, and Mrs. Lunis, for a day's outing to Glen Island, Manhattan Beach, Long Branch, and other resorts, and treated them to the best these places afforded, and before I left New York, I had gained the affection and esteem of this honest, obscure, but exceedingly interesting family.

Gene was never tired in showing me little attentions. Many a night, we wandered about the city slums, until one and two in the morning. Gene was a native of New York, and knew every street of the big town, from the battery to One Hundred and Eightieth Street.

I had never before met a woman like Mrs. Lunis. Brought up as I was in my uncle's home, with no help

but black servants, Mrs. Lunis, with her Irish American cleverness, thrift and quick intelligence, and originality of character, was charming to me, a delightful experience that I could not soon forget. Besides her delicious cooking, her motherliness completely won my heart, and Nina,—oh, Nina, Nina, if I could only have brushed aside the fate that was then pursuing you, I would have given my right hand, to have averted it, ah, yes, even my life, to have snatched you from it, but the inevitable is hidden, and well that it is. Even if the power were given us to for a moment draw aside the veil that hides the unseen, and the happiness of the future years, few of us would have the courage to do so.

CHAPTER III.

ROSCOE DELANO.

I must now relate what transpired, before I left the Lunis's to visit my friend Bertram Arlington, at his country home Anlace. Nina Palermo we know was employed as saleswoman in one of the large drygoods department stores, which cluster all along Sixth Avenue from Fourteenth Street up to Twenty-third, and along Twenty-third to Broadway.

In my desire to see and learn all I could, I dropped in one morning to one of those large shops, keeping myself moving with the crowd of shoppers so as to not attract attention. I had a splendid chance to observe all the young saleswomen and those who were not so young. They all wore good clothes, and their dresses and shirt waists fitted them perfectly, which seems to be characteristic of all classes in New York City, with the exception of the very poor. The girls and women were all possessed of average good looks and here and there was one with marked style and handsome, but none had the beauty of Nina

Palermo. Most all had that hard dominant expression, which mars the faces of most of the women of New York City.

I had paced up and down several of the aisles, when I halted for a few seconds to look about me, when I was startled with surprise for my glance, at that moment fell on Nina Palermo. She did not see me for she was busy waiting on one of the many lady customers that clustered about the counter where she served. I hurried away, and took a position behind a pillar some distance from her counter, where I had a good view of her, but she could not see me as the crowd of shoppers passed to and fro continuously.

I learned that there is a man at the head of every department, but my attention was drawn particularly to one man, who seemed to be the head manager of the whole floor. He was about forty-three or four years of age, tall, well built, and inclined to stoutness. He had dark reddish hair, a florid complexion, a full drooping mustache, and small cold light greenish-blue eyes. He was well dressed, well groomed, and looked as if he enjoyed the good things of this life, as well as its forbidden things. For sense, sense, stamped every lineament of Roscoe Delano's face. He was a type of a class of large salaried business men, to be found now in all large cities, especially in New York, since the department stores have come in. Men who would be merchants, but know the force of combines, and that in trying to compete with these forces in a business of their own, they could not make ends meet. To his subordinates Delano was cold, arrogant and dictatorial.

Several times I saw him stop as he came Nina's way, and if she were not busy chat a moment with her. I observed that while he spoke with her, his manner changed, his arrogance seemed to melt somewhat, and his air, while condescending had a touch of gallantry in a clumsy way. Once while he stopped to chat awhile he leaned over the counter, and with a twirl of his mustache whispered something in her ear. Nina blushed but smiled assent to what he said. That moment my eyes chanced to rest upon a girl, behind a counter where I stood. She was a hand-

some blonde, of medium height, her face, attractive at any other time, was now darkened with rage and hate, her eyes, which were fixed on some one opposite her, blazed with the venom of a serpent. I followed their direction, and to my surprise they were fastened on Delano. Delano then walked away, and the girl, pale and trembling, turned to wait on a customer. In a few moments Delano came back. He had in his hand, a small white paper box, which he laid on the counter before Nina, and pretended to give her some instructions concerning the goods it contained. After he left I saw Nina take from amidst the rolls of ribbon, a letter and slip it in her pocket.

All this manoeuvering went on while the people kept coming and going, and Nina busy waiting upon the shoppers. I felt that the letter was the finale to the morning's performance. Whether Nina had been in the habit of receiving this kind of attention from the head manager, or how long it had been going on, I did not at that time know, but I afterwards learned that it was of recent date, and the letter, the first she had ever received from that gentleman. I looked at my watch, it was just twenty minutes past twelve. I left the store, and made my way to Twenty-third Street went into Denn's and ordered lunch.

After lunch I walked east to Fifth Avenue, down Fifth Avenue, stopping at the different bookstores, where I selected a few new books, and the magazines for June, then returned to my lodgings, as the day was oppressively warm. On reaching my rooms, I quickly peeled off hat, coat and shoes. In slippers, and gallowses down, I arranged the inside shutters, so I could have the light, and at the same time the breeze, then threw myself upon the couch, near the window, to have a good read, and enjoy that exquisite prose poem, in Scotch dialect, Barrie's "A Window In Thrums." I know not how long I read, I was so deeply interested, when I was startled by the light quick footstep of Nina, which I had come to distinguish from all the other many footsteps, that passed and repassed in the hall. Then the opening of the door, which led from the hall into Mrs. Lunis's dining-room. I looked

at my watch, it was just five, and I knew Nina's usual hour for getting home in the evening, was half-past six.

I rose quickly from the sofa, and stole softly to the door of my little bedroom, and listened. I heard Nina exclaim as she entered the kitchen where Mrs. Lunis was preparing supper, "Oh, mother, Mr. Hunters let me off early. I am going with a party of girls this evening for a sail to Coney Island. Mr. Hunters is going along, the boat leaves at half after six, and I will not be home until nearly twelve; you will not mind me going?"

"Well, if it's with your girl friends, and Mr. Hunters and his family, I suppose there is no harm to be anticipated, but Nina my dear child, I will not allow you to go alone with any young man, to the Island."

"You must trust me mother, I am old enough now to take care of myself," replied Nina.

"Yes child, other girls have said the same before, but where are they now? We know what happened, we know what happens every day to girls who are headstrong, an' will have their own way, an' disobey their parents an' elders. They place themselves in the way of temptation, an' when it comes they are too weak to resist it."

"Don't preach mother dear, you will spoil all my pleasure," returned Nina, laughingly.

"Nina, my girl, I have no wish to spoil any pleasure of yours, that is good, an' innocent, an' healthy, but in these days, a girl can't be too guarded. I would advise you though to hurry up an' get yourself off before Gene comes home, you know how he takes on if you go to any public pleasure places without him," said Mrs. Lunis.

"I have never gone to any public resort, without him, but once, and that was with Emma Cowen to Glen Island, and I went with your consent, old mother dear, so you needn't take on such a serious air over this little excursion, for I am going." The last sentence was spoken in quick and decided tones, that told her mind was made up to go, and she would not be dissuaded from her purpose.

I left the door, and hurriedly began to dress, changing my pants for an older and darker pair, my white linen for a blue check gingham shirt and collar, wearing with it

a black tie. Donning my black student coat, and soft felt slouch hat, I took from the wardrobe a light cloth ulster, as there is always a cool sharp wind rises here after the sun goes down, no matter how warm the day has been, this with my cane I laid on the table, and sat down near the window, to watch and wait.

I had not long to wait. In about ten minutes, I heard Nina open the sitting-room door, and bid her mother goodby, then the echo of her quick, light, but firm footstep, mingled with the rustle of her drapery, in the hall. Through the slats of my shutters, I saw her come out and go towards Sixth Avenue. I picked up my ulster and cane from the table, and in a second had my door locked, and was out in the street. She had gained about half a block, but I soon caught up with her, keeping about fifty paces behind her. She walked until she came to Fourth Avenue, turned down Fourth Avenue to Twenty-third Street, walked west until she came to Sixth Avenue, then down Sixth Avenue, until she came to the Fourteenth Street elevated station. She crossed here to the right hand corner, and from the shadow of the station, on the downtown side, a man stepped out and met her as she came up. It was Roscoe Delano.

They turned and went together up the steps of the station. I slipped on my ulster, drew up the collar about my neck, and followed on after. Just as I dropped my ticket into the box, the downtown train steamed in. Delano and Nina seated themselves in the center of the car with their backs to me. I threw myself into a corner seat by the door. I had now a better view of Roscoe Delano's face than I had in the morning, as I could see from where I was seated his full profile.

He wore the same light business suit, with dark tan kid gloves, also a high shiny hat of fashionable make, and carried a cane. Nina was clad in white, her skirt of some soft material, with a sort of sheen to it. The bodice was of some lacey material with silken ruffles, falling over the large sleeves. A white satin sash belted her slim waist, her white sailor hat sat jauntily on her beautiful head, with its rich lustrous braids of black hair.

The brilliant complexion, the large luminous eyes, with

their long fringed lids, the pouting mouth, and that air of indefinable something which is the inheritance of good blood, and pure ancestry, and which always speaks for itself.

Roscoe Delano, neither looked to the right, nor to the left, but kept his eyes fastened on the girl, as if devouring her beauty. He talked to her, whispered to her, and several times she blushed scarlet under her veil. But with all his adulation, she never showed any boldness, but rather annoyance, and once or twice seemed to wince under his too flagrant gaze. Oh, Nina, as I sat there watching you, how my heart ached, how my blood boiled, and all the gallant manhood in me kept rising in my throat, and choking me. I wanted to take this man, who only saw in your physical beauty, so much gratification for his lust, yes take him by the collar of his coat, open the car window, and throw him out, but I could not make a scene. I have often asked myself since, if she had been my own young sister wouldn't I have given my life, to have protected her? Indeed I would not have hesitated a moment, to have dragged her from him, and if he interfered I would have shot him down where he stood. But Nina was not my sister, but a comparative stranger to me and not knowing the world then as now, I tried to persuade myself, there was perhaps no intention of wrong doing on Delano's part. I knew there was none on hers. Oh no, she was as innocent of treachery on Delano's part as a baby, her mind was full only of the anticipated pleasure of her jaunt, and was as free from guile, as the bird's song of a bright spring morning.

Bright intelligent girls of Nina's place in life, at her age, feel the grind of poverty, and the lash of the tax master, when they have to toil, in a work shop, bent over their needle, or stand ten hours a day on their feet behind a counter, for a few dollars a week. Nina had but passed her nineteenth year, full of animal life, and remarkable physical attractions, living in the gayest, most luxurious city of America, or any other country. Where women pamper the body, at the expense of the mind, and soul. Where men worship, the physical, and place the courtesan upon a throne.

Besides the girl knew she could not afford to offend Roscoe Delano, he had the power to discharge her, and to injure her, in many ways. She was not the only girl he had paid special attention to in the years he had been head manager of that floor, in that large mercantile house. But Nina was innocent of it, which I learned afterwards in the events that followed. I was aroused here by the cars approaching the station, and the conductor calling out, " Park Place." Delano rose so did Nina, and I jumped to my feet, the train slacked up, then stopped, I followed on after Nina and Delano. They go down 'the stairs, Delano leading the way

It is now about twilight, but the streets are bright as day, brilliant with electric lights. The buildings of gray and white stone, and red brick, rear their great height up into the sky, looking like tall slender columns, piercing the blue jewelled heavens, and throwing dark shadows among the flashing, gleaming lamps. They cross the street, and stand a few moments in earnest conversation, but it is Delano who does the talking, as the girl stands silent, and looks around her, as if disappointed about something; perhaps they were to meet the party with Mr. Hunters here, but there is no party of young women in sight. Then after some moments the sound of Nina's voice reaches my ear, and seems to say, " You wrote in your note, that we were all to meet here, and go from here to the boat." Delano takes her, by the arm, but she hesitates about going with him, finally she yields to his persuasion, and they turn towards Broadway. When they reach there, they cut over by the post-office, to the opposite side of Park Place, and make direct for Denn's restaurant. I keep in the shadow behind them and follow on.

They go upstairs to the salon; up another flight, there is a parlor for ladies and gentlemen. Delano urges her to go up there, but she refuses. Then they take seats at a private table, near a front window. I am very hungry myself, not having had anything to eat since noon, and then but a light lunch. I seated myself in about the center of the long dining-room, near the wall, and partially behind a pillar, so that if Nina, who was seated opposite

Delano, and showing but a profile view of her face, should happen to turn and look my way, I could conceal my head, and shoulders, behind the pillar. I felt perfectly safe as to her recognizing me, and Roscoe Delano did not know there was such a person, as Beverly Osgood in existence.

I saw the waitress cover the mahogany table, with a white linen cloth, and from Delano's instructions to her and the preparations that followed, I knew he was going to treat himself and Nina to no small spread. My own dinner consisted of three courses, first a bowl of chicken bouillon, broiled fresh mackerel, fried potatoes, lettuce, and a dish of tomatoes, and for dessert, a plate of wheat cakes, for which this restaurant is famous, with maple syrup, and coffee, and as I am a judge of that beverage, it was not bad for a restaurant.

When I finished my repast I sat watching my *affaire d'amour*. Nina laughed and chatted, and seemed to heartily enjoy eating. I saw Delano pour wine into a glass, and offer it to her, but she left it untouched, which pleased me greatly. But Delano, refreshed himself with several glasses. After spending an hour or so at a table, they rose to go, then Nina, turned herself around and looked straight in the direction of where I was seated. I crouched behind the pillar, taking a position where I could see and not be seen. Nina looked radiant as if she were enjoying her escapade with every fibre of her being. She had forgotten her disappointment at not finding her girl friends, and her scruples, about going any farther alone with Delano. But his plausible excuses to her, that they had missed them, and that they had gone on fearing to miss the boat, which he said they were entirely too late for set her mind at rest, as regarded any deception on his part.

After giving them a good start, I made haste to follow. When I reached the street, they were walking ahead of me, and stopped at the corner of Park Place, where the angle of the post-office cuts into the open square. They stood there about five minutes, Delano all the while pleading with her to get into a carriage, which he had called, and again her voice reached me, and I heard her say, "I prefer to go home by the cars." Delano's tone grew a

little louder, and with a ring of impatience I heard him say, "We will not reach the Casino in time, if we go by the cars, it is now half after nine and in any case the play will have long begun." He took her arm to help her into the carriage.

"I would rather go home," she answered, drawing back from him, "my mother will be worried about me if I stay out too late."

"Tut, tut, Nina, don't be foolish, I just want to give you a little pleasure. I wouldn't harm a hair of your head for all the world. Don't be foolish, we will go to the play now, and have the evening out."

As I saw Nina place her foot upon the carriage step, the blood again, as in the elevated train, went boiling through my veins and seemed to lodge in my throat, and choke me. I wanted to rush up and drag the girl from him, but the dread of making a scene, held me back. I was almost a stranger to the girl, and Delano, didn't know me from any other man he met upon the street. If I interfered he would call an officer, and have me arrested, and perhaps I would bring trouble on the family. I told myself to trust to the girl's sense of right and wrong to protect herself. She was of good family, her father a gentleman, a man of title, and her mother, a staunch honest woman, of a race of people that no man or woman need be ashamed of. Whatever faults of nationality they may have, the Irish women are noted for their comeliness and great virtue. Besides, Nina herself had such strength of character, yet undeveloped, but it was there, and the incidents were hurrying on which would stir all the deep forces of her being into action, and leap in a moment from the girl to a woman and feel the pangs, humiliations of being a woman, and suffer as only a woman is made to suffer.

Roscoe Delano helped her into the carriage, and sprang in after her. The driver closed the door, jumped up on his box, whipped up his horses, and they dashed away. I started to run across the square to Broadway, to call a cab, as one is always sure to find several standing about all hours of the night, in that vicinity. But a sort of sickness seized me, my head swam and my eyes were blinded

for a moment, and I leaned against a lamp post where I had been standing for support. In a few minutes I felt better, and looked about me to see if there were a cab in hailing distance, but there was none. I started again to cross the square and had gotten through several of the angles, when I staggered, reeled, and fell. Luckily I had stepped upon the soft grass plats, to make a short cut to Broadway, and my head struck the soft earth. I lay there a few seconds, then picked myself up, as best I could, and crawled to Broadway, where I found a cab.

As I stepped into the cab, I felt the same dizzy sensation, coming over me, then my nose began to bleed profusely, an infirmity of mine from childhood, when laboring under great excitement. Since grown to manhood, it comes less frequent. The driver asked me where to? I gave him the number of my lodgings, for I knew the chase was over for me that night.

When the cab door closed upon me I laid my head back on the cushions, and in less than twenty minutes, I was home. I called to Mrs. Lunis, who was in the sitting-room with Gene, who was seated by the table, reading. I told her I had had a fall, and the fall caused my nose to bleed. I asked her to send for some ice. Gene immediately offered to go for it, also to the drug store, to have a prescription filled, given me by our own family physician for the purpose. When Gene returned with the ice, lemons, and bottle of medicine, I was soon made comfortable by the combined efforts of himself and his mother. Gene at first thought I had carried my inquisitiveness too far, and some fellow had laid me out, as he expressed it afterwards. In a little while they left me to go to bed, and to sleep, as Mrs. Lunis said, on closing my door.

But I had no intention of going to sleep. I lay upon my couch, for some time, until the streets grew quiet, and the footsteps upon the pavement fewer. The walking in and out through the hall about ceased, with the exception now and then, of a belated straggler, who picked his, or her way cautiously up the stairs, for the janitor had long ago put out the lights.

Then my listening ear caught the rustle of drapery,

and a quick light footfall, passing my door, then a soft knock on Mrs. Lunis's door. It was opened immediately as if some one had been waiting up for her return. As the door closed I heard a low musical tee-hee-hee, and a voice I knew to be Gene's, say, "Hishe-she," I rose from the sofa, and slipped to the window, opened the shutters, took out my watch, and looked at it; the hands were just at twelve. I undressed, went to bed, with my mind at ease, and said to myself, Nina has just come from the theatre. Delano, perhaps has after all acted like a gentleman, and is not the scoundrel I thought him.

Poor Nina, your light tee-hee-hee, was but the faint echo of the excitement you were trying to repress, the excitement of your narrow escape from the clutches of Delano, and the delight, of finding yourself, safe at home, under your mother's roof. And in your unnaturally bright eyes, that were burning with unshed tears, you said down in the depths of your thumping heart, that never again would you go out alone with any man but Gene. Oh, Nina, you will have to pay the penalty of being poor and beautiful. But sleep dearest girl to-night, neither you or Gene, who loves you, knows what the morrow will bring forth.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLIGHT.

It was about nine o'clock, the following evening, when I knocked at the door of the Lunis's sitting-room. I had just returned from a short walk after dinner, and wished to have a half hour's chat with Mrs. Lunis and Gene, which generally wound up by the latter and myself going out for another stroll that lasted until midnight.

I was also curious about Nina, and wished to see how she acted after her escapade of the evening before.

I knew she had gone as usual to work that morning, for I had seen her through my blinds, tripping by my

window. But instead of Nina, I saw as I entered the door, Emma Cowen, Nina's friend, who lived above the Lunis's on the second floor; she worked in the dress making department in the same establishment, where Nina was saleswoman. Emma, was sitting to my left, and was crying. Mrs. Lunis, was seated by the table, with her head resting on her hand. I could see by the light of the lamp which fell upon her face, that she had aged, since the evening before, nearly twenty years. Gene was walking up and down the floor, with his hands behind his back. He stopped as I entered, to place me a chair. I then observed that his face was deadly pale, and he seemed to have aged, like his mother. He also looked taller to me, as if he had taken on ten years of growth and maturity in the last twenty-four hours.

After I was seated, he continued pacing the floor, his hands, in his trousers pockets. Several times, he took them out, threw back his shoulders, and shook his arms, loose from the elbows down. After a short while he looked over to where I was seated, and the tears came to his eyes. "Come," he said stooping to pick up his hat from the sill of the area window where it lay, "let us go out, Mr. Osgood, for a walk."

"Gene, my son," said Mrs. Lunis, rising, as we stood by the door, Gene with his hand on the knob, "I beg of you, for my sake, an' your own, not to do anything rash, it will do no good, it will not help matters to stain your hands with crime. If you were to kill that man, as he deserves to be killed, you would hang for it, you are poor, and he is rich. Besides to murder is an awful thing; to take life, which you cannot give again. This is no new story dear sir," she continued, turning to me, with tears in her eyes, "every week or two, there's just such a scandal among us poor people. Somebody's girl has disappeared, been stolen, or spirited away, gone to the bad. The air about here is always rife with just sick doin's.

"But I thought my Nina would steer clear of these goin's on, I was so careful in her bringing up, strict with her, in regard to the company she kept, an' her girl associates. I knew a girl, as good-looking as Nina, an' one

who had to earn her bread, would be subject to a great many temptations. But she was no vain, foolish, frivolous girl, but had lots of common sense, an' strength of character, an' not one that would be easily led astray. She told me she was going with a party of girls, an' Mr. Hunters an' his family, I never knew Nina to tell an untruth before. I think this man, who she was seen in company with must have deceived her, about the girls going along. Oh, dear sir I love the girl, as if she were my own daughter."

Here she broke down, covered her face with her apron, and wept.

"She should ha' known better," she began, after some minutes, and wiping her eyes, "after all these years of care of her, not to come home to me, as if I would believe anything that lying man said about her, an even if there was a grain of truth in his charges as if I would shut my door, or my heart against her."

"She will come home mother," said Gene, in a voice expressive of the tears his eyes refused to shed, "she may be home, every moment, and if she isn't home in an hour or two, I will find the man that brought the awful charges against her, and this shame upon our lives, and settle it with him."

"Na, na, my son, you will do nothing of the kind. I am all right now, I must be strong and bear it."

"That is the way with women," said Gene leaving the door, and he began to pace the floor again, "you unman men, and make of them cowardly cravens. Some one has got to take the lead, mother some of us must put all ties, and selfish considerations aside, and make an example of the man who dares with impunity commit the base deed that was done today, casting a blight upon the fair name and life of my young sister, to serve his own base ends, because she resisted. Oh, Nina, my beautiful Nina, my promised wife." The last words, nearly choked him, and the tears, which he had forced back, now coursed down his cheeks, as he walked up and down the floor.

I stood like one rooted to the spot. I could neither speak, nor act in the presence of this great grief. My

heart was filled with a deep and tender sympathy for this manly fellow, for the words he had just uttered, were my own sentiments, and the more I thought of them the more my blood boiled in my veins, and my wrath and indignation increased against the man, who was the cause of it all, until I was ready at sight, to send a bullet seething through Delano's brain.

"Gene," said his mother, as we stepped to the door, "try my son, and be calm, don't do anything you will be sorry for, anything that will ruin your own life, and mine, you will break my heart if you do. No matter what the provocation, you can't mend matters by taking things in your own hands. You must leave it to a higher power. God is good, He will adjust things, not a sparrow shall fall to the ground, without our heavenly Father knowing it."

"Mother dear, don't worry, rest your mind, I will do nothing until Nina comes home," and he bent over and kissed his mother.

We then left, and in a few seconds we were out upon the street in the cool, fresh air. Knowing what I did about the affair of the night before, I felt that now was my time to speak. "Gene," I said, 'I feel deeply for you, if you were my own brother, and Nina my own sister, I could not feel worse. I am grieved to the heart to have this happen, during my stay with you. Of course I but surmise its nature, my conjectures may be all wrong. I am but a stranger to yourself and mother, but I call myself a gentleman in every sense of that much abused word. When I say I am a gentleman, I am what I claim to be, therefore, I ask you to make me a participant in your trouble, and if I can in any way be of service to you, command me."

He looked at me and there shot a gleam from his eyes, that shone in the night, like a thread of lightning out of a dark thunder cloud. "Mr. Osgood," he replied, "from what my mother and myself have seen of you, I have every reason to believe and consider you a gentleman, and a man of honor."

Then Gene related to me all that Emma Cowen had told him, and his mother, of what had taken place that

morning at the store concerning Nina, and the charges brought against her, by the very man who had invited her out.

"At first," he began, "I thought possibly you might be the man seen in the carriage with her, but come to think of it, you came home sick, and had been home nearly two hours before Nina. Besides Emma Cowen, said you were not in it. The man, who took her out was the head manager of all the departments on her floor, and the one who occupied the carriage with her, was none other than this man, Roscoe Delano. A shiver passed over me at the mention of his name. Then he proved the villain after all, I thought to myself. The man preferred charges against the poor thing, to Mr. Wait, the head manager of the whole shop, in order to disgrace her, and turn her out of the establishment, humiliated, and degraded. Emma Cowen says, it is woe to the girl he takes a fancy to, if she don't reciprocate. The trouble is they generally reciprocate, or succumb, and that is what angered him with Nina.

"Whether Nina comes home or not, I will go to this Delano, and if he don't apologize, and take back every word he said to Mr. Wait before him, and the whole shop, I will slap his face, then shoot him down where he stands. Mr. Osgood, there must be some stop put to this. The cry of reform goes up from all around us. Vice and crime, must be held in check, is the wail of the platform, and lecture-room. The pulpit denounces sin, and laments and cries about the curse of the saloon, and alcoholism, but like divorces, this deadly sensuality, no one has the courage to attack.

"This libertinism that watches, and waits for young innocent girls to betray them, as a cat watches for the young helpless fledgling which may fall from the nest, only this difference, the cats kill their prey, which is more merciful in the end, but the sensualist, after a few months, abandons his, and branded with shame, and disgrace, she becomes an outcast, the street her home, no one caring, no one pitying her. That is what fills the public streets of New York, and every other large city, at night, with women, and young girls. The police have

orders to arrest them, and they do arrest them and drag them through the public thoroughfare like so many cattle, and throw them into prison. Either that or they levy such fines upon them, they fatten and grow rich in a little while from the proceeds."

While he spoke, I looked at him in astonishment. I did not think it was possible for a young man like him to observe so much, or care to grasp in any way, these social problems. The more I was thrown in his company, the more I saw he was no ordinary young workman, no every-day, happy-go-lucky mechanic. The words he spoke, were my own observations. I did not have this phase of life in my mind, when I came to New York, and rented my present lodgings, but to see and to learn, how the laboring classes, the large masses of the poor people, lived in a densely populated city like New York, and get a glimpse of their domestic and inner life. But at every step of my way, in the street, in the cars, in every gathering, theatre or church, and in the parlor, into every face I looked of man or woman, I had this awful phase thrust upon me.

The saying of our Lord "That to the pure all things are pure," is true; that is the pure are never suspicious, and to the really pure, there is nothing so repulsive, so awful, looking from their lofty heights, as licentiousness. Their mission is not to condemn but to save. It was only the pure and spotless Christ, who could say to those who were stoning the adulterous woman, "He that be without sin, first cast a stone at her." The pure never throw stones at the weak and fallen. But the woman was none the less sinful, in the eyes of the Saviour, it was the poor helpless, defenceless condition of the woman, which touched his compassionate heart. And His rebuke was to the old rascals, steeped in licentiousness, who were stoning her, for an act that they were participants in, while they went scot free.

"Yes, my dear fellow," I answered, "I am in sympathy with every word you have uttered. I was born in the southwest, my mother and father were Southerners, and I believe in the code. I think when it went out of date, we lost something from our manhood. There are

things which only life, and the spilling of blood can settle. Like many more customs, the duel, had its right and its wrong side but what hasn't?"

"My dear boy, men have died, for less worthy, and less fair women, than Nina Palermo. But you are the only man who can avenge her, as you are the representative of her family, and the injured party, indeed for that matter, all honorable men, and women, have been injured by such an outrage. Still my dear fellow, I would advise you to keep a cool head, for awhile. Times have changed, sentiments have changed, this is not an age of gallantry or chivalry. You are very young and you have a mother depending on you for support. So you must not thoughtlessly throw away your life, but by living be a greater service to Nina."

"Oh, Mr. Osgood, I did not think that you with your fresh and liberal ideas, of things, and your fine southern courtesy, would speak in that cold prosaic way," he said, with impatience. "I hear that kind of talk on all sides, everywhere I go, and in everything I read, it's self, self, look out for self. I tell you it's what is sapping and drying up all the sentiment, warmth, and best feeling in us, leaving us clods."

"My dear boy, I would not stop nor stay one impulse to a gallant, or chivalrous act, or any noble sentiment. But my dear fellow, this is not worth the throwing away of your young life. You have other duties now, and your duty is to live. When the time comes, and circumstances are such, that nothing but the giving up of life, can justify the end, or save those you hold dear, then give it freely, but it is braver and more heroic, to live, and do our duty, and the work our hands find to do. Come let us retrace our steps home, your delay and absence will add suspense, and anxiety to your mother's already overburdened heart."

"Poor mother, what will she do if Nina doesn't return, she was so much company and such a help to her in every way."

"She may be home when we get back," I said, and he walked on faster, as if my words, had given him a sudden gleam of hope, that she might be there awaiting him.

It was eleven o'clock when we got back, but there was no Nina. Emma Cowen remained with Mrs. Lunis until our return, then she took leave to go to her own apartments. It was nearly two o'clock, when I bid Gene and his mother good-night, to go to my room, and to bed.

CHAPTER V.

SHE STOOD LOOKING UP AT THE DOOR OF THE GREAT DARK HOUSE.

I must now take the privilege of a seer, and relate what took place, at the great store. I will not use Emma Cowen's words as told to Gene and his mother, and as Gene related them to me, but as if I myself were an eye-witness.

The following morning, after her jaunt the night before, we know that Nina went as usual to her work, and took her place at her counter. She was in splendid spirits, her face radiant with smiles, and as her companions spoke to her, she bowed from counter to counter. When Delano made his appearance, she threw back her shoulders, tossed her head, and smiled defiantly, but her smile died on her lips, and her cheek blanched white, as her glance met his; and in that momentary glance, his face was darkened, and disfigured by all that was evil, cruel, and arrogant in the man's nature. She had thwarted him in his plans of pleasure the evening before, now he would let her see that he was not to be trifled with, that he was master; he would make her feel his power before the day grew a few hours older. Poor Nina, she was as helpless as a mouse, in the claws of a cat.

About half past ten, she was summoned to the private office, of Mr. Waite, the superintendent of the whole establishment. "I will be there in a minute, as soon as I finish waiting on this lady," she said to the boy who

brought the message. "You must come along with me Miss Palermo, these are my orders," answered the boy. On hearing this she dropped the ribbon she held in her hand, drew herself up, and proudly passed from behind the counter, and followed the boy through the store, with the air of a queen, neither looking to the right nor the left of her. Her companions in labor, glanced from one to the other inquiringly. "It can't be her discharge," they whispered one to the other. They knew they generally got that in a little red check, sealed in an envelope Saturday night, with their salary.

When Nina entered the office, Delano sat leaning back in a chair, with his head bent, and resting on one hand. To his right were seated two young men, clerks, at their desks. To the left of him, was a small apartment railed off, it had two windows facing the east, a large desk, and several easy chairs. Before this desk, was seated Mr. Waite, the head manager of the whole house. He was a tall dark man, about fifty years of age, with hair slightly touched with gray. That slick, well fed, well groomed look, which constituted the make up of Delano, was entirely lacking in this man. The hard, cold bloodless man of business, was there, a perfect type, of the trader, in all its worst, and most disagreeable elements.

Dollars and cents, dollars and cents, had wrung in John Waite's ear, ever since a small cash boy, in one of the large Boston dry goods stores. Their chink was the only music she knew, the only music he cared to know, or to hear. The passion for money getting had grown upon him, in the long years of trade, until it became the one predominant appetite of his life, and the one which held all others in check. Of the two types of men, Delano was in a sense, no worse than his chief. It is not the things we do, that so much count, as the things we leave undone.

Nina's face was deadly white, and the blood seemed to congeal in her veins, and freeze her with fright, as the boy led her past Delano, who never moved, to the side of the great man's chair, where she stood with her shoulders thrown back, her head proudly poised, her features

set, as if chiseled in marble, from which shone the large black eyes, like burning balls of fire. John Waite turned in his chair, and cast a furtive glance from under his shaggy brows towards her. "Not bad looking," he muttered to himself, as he rose up and took a few papers from his desk. "Young woman, what is your name?" he asked, giving the papers a slight shake, while he gazed straight at the wall as if addressing it. A moment's silence. "Your name," he repeated, in a voice louder and more harsh.

"Nina Palermo," came low and hissing through her shut teeth. "Nina Palermo," began the great man, showing as little feeling, as he would if he were telling a Poodle, or a Pug dog, to get out of his way, "Nina Palermo, you have been accused to me by those in authority here in this house, of unseemly behavior, conduct unbefitting a young woman in our employ. As it is one of the strict rules of this establishment, where we have necessarily to keep many girls and women, to have as much for our own sake, as well as the demand of the public, as good a code of morals, among them as possible." As these words reached Nina's ear she trembled as with a chill, and wrung her hands, which were stone cold. She tried to speak, but her teeth only chattered, and issued no sound. Then she turned her eyes upon Delano, who never stirred, but kept his head bowed in his hands. And womanlike her sympathy flew to him, as she thought him, under the same condemnation as herself. For say what we will about the strength, and protection, of man to woman, woman, is more often the protector of man. A man will protect his sister, and mother, and wife, from another man's indignities, but the true woman, with her delicacy, her fine sensibilities, and the shielding, sheltering, qualities of her nature, more often protects the man, than he does her.

"You were seen out with a certain gentleman, last night," continued Waite, "and a strict watch was kept of your doings, from the time you left the restaurant, until the carriage, you occupied, with this man, drew up before a certain house, on a certain street. The person who preferred these charges, states on oath, that the

house is of ill repute, and that you and this man got out." John Waite, stood with his back to the girl, and spoke the last sentence in a cold, passionless voice, had he been a dead man, he could not have evinced less feeling, although he had a wife, and young daughter, living in a handsome house, of brown stone, near Central Park. All the blood in Nina's body, went seething to her brain, and cheeks, burning them scarlet. "It is false," she said hoarsely, shading her eyes, the indignation, which wounded and lacerated her heart, flamed out from under the drooping lids, scorching the long black lashes and almost blinding her. "I have never done anything in my life, that would be considered unseemly conduct in a girl. I live at home with my adopted mother, and brother, my mother is a highly respectable woman, and Eugene her son, is an honest noble boy. I have never gone out but once before with any man, but my brother Gene. I went last night, but I did it more to please the gentleman I went with than any gratification on my own part, and he knows I did nothing wrong, unless it was in going out with him."

She stood straight and tall, this beautiful young thing whose life span had run but nineteen or twenty years. Her accusers, a man over forty, and her pitiless judge, a man of fifty, a husband, and a father. But John Waite did everything on strictly business principles, his employees were no more to him, than so many serfs, to come and go at his bidding. Indeed the black slaves of the South, were free and happy, compared to the employees of this great commercial establishment in New York. Although Delano's chief, he was in some way indebted to him, thus every man, morally, as well as monetary sells himself, to some other man. They heed not the words of the Master, "For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and lose his own soul." Ninety-nine per cent of all the men, who walk the street of our large cities of the world, have bartered away their souls. The man with a million owns the man worth five hundred thousand, and the man with two millions, owns the man with one, and so on.

As Nina speaks, one of the young men sitting at the

desk to the left, is very restive, and his face is flushed, he puts his hand, to his head, again and again, and several times he coughs, to choke down something which persists in rising in his throat. He is a fine looking young fellow, of about twenty-five years, and a little of an athlete. He can hardly keep from rising and laying out Delano, and old Waite, the brute, and carry the girl off captive. He could do it too. These are his thoughts, but poor fellow, like most men who are brave, and at the same time poor, he carries a halter around his neck, he has a mother to support, so he gulps his feelings down and hates himself, because he must.

"The person who preferred these complaints against you," said Mr. Waite, without changing his tone, or making a move of his body, "saw the carriage stop before this house, and yourself and a gentleman friend get out and ascend the steps. Now Miss Palermo, I shall have to remove you, on the charge of immoral conduct."

All the proud blood of her Italian father, and its southern fire and passion, now flamed up and chased away the timidity and fear, which had at first nearly paralyzed her. "It's false, it's untrue, it's a lie black as hell," she cried, raising both hands up to her temples, and brushing back the curls from her brow. "You are at perfect liberty to dismiss me, but not on this awful charge, you dare not do it. It would follow me to every shop in New York City, every respectable girl, and woman, would shun me, and every woman leading a questionable life, and your house is full of them, forced into it by the same circumstances by which you are trying to force me. These women would be the first to point the finger of scorn at me. Besides it would kill my mother. We are poor, but my mother, is highly respectable and proud of her good name. She reared me from a little child, side by side with Eugene her son, and my brother. Honest brave Gene, what would he think? That I had all this time been deceiving him, that young as I am, I was a bad girl. No, no, discharge me, I don't care for that, but not on such a base falsehood, of being immoral, I could not endure, I could not live and bear up under it. She turned to Delano, he squirmed in his

chair, for he felt her eyes upon him, but he kept his face buried in his hands.

“ Mr. Delano, are you going to sit there silent, and let me go from here and into the world, with the shadow of that black lie, following me all the days of my life? Speak out and tell the truth, or are you too much of a coward ?” Delano winced, turned in his seat, crossed one leg over the other. “ Speak out, and defend me,—you will not. Mr. Waite,” she cried, passionately, pointing to Delano, Mr. Waite neither turned to the right nor the left, but kept his back to her, “ Mr. Delano is the man, who was in the carriage with me, he invited me to go on an excursion to Coney Island. I haven’t his note with me but in his note, he said, he had invited several of the girls to go along, also Mr. Hunters, the head of my department.

“ When I got to the place appointed for us to meet, there was no one there but Mr. Delano; I asked him where the girls were, I thought it time they were on hand, as I myself was none too early. He said we must have missed them, that we would take the elevated cars to Park Place, and perhaps catch up with them there. When we arrived there, no party was in sight, Mr. Delano said, it was then too late to reach the boat, and he proposed going to Denn’s restaurant where he ordered supper. While we were eating supper, he suggested going to the Casino, as we missed the others. When we left the restaurant, he called a carriage, saying we would be too late to go by the cars. At first I refused to go into the carriage, I said, I preferred to go by the cars, but I would rather go home.

“ But he persuaded me to go into the carriage, and we went to the Casino. After the play, I requested that he would tell the driver, to stop at the corner of Third Avenue, and Twenty-F— Street. I would get out there and walk home, as I did not want the neighbors to see a carriage stop before our door so late at night. I never thought of evil, I never dreamed but what Mr. Delano was an honorable gentleman, when the carriage drew up, and I got out, I discovered that we were not on Third Avenue, but in the middle of a private street, the houses, great

tall, grand looking, residences. But I thought it was the driver who made the mistake until Mr. Delano took my hand, and said his sister lived in the house, that she was holding a reception, and he would like me to go in, that she would receive me kindly, and it would be a sort of a finish to the night. I drew my hand away, turned quickly about, before he could move, for the house was all dark, and a great fear came over me and I started to run as hard as I could, and never stopped until I reached Third Avenue, and my own number."

All this was spoken in strong and passionate vehemence, her color coming and going, her large eyes flaming, their long dark lashes seeming to act as shade to cool the hot lava that burned them.

"Speak out," she cried, taking a step or two nearer Delano's chair, "speak out and defend me, you know the truth, and what I have told is the truth." He never moved his position, but kept his head bent, and turned from her. "Oh, are you lost to all manhood, all gallantry, have you no sister, no mother, have you no pity, no heart? Oh, I see it all now, you are the informer, you have planned this to ruin me, because I was not immoral, because I was not the low thing you would make of me. She raised her arms above her head, wrung her hands in the air, swayed to and fro, tottered, reeled, and fell to the floor, in a dead swoon.

The young man at the desk got up, his eyes were blazing, and his face white as his shirt bosom, and he was stifling for a breath of fresh air. As he started to leave the office, he caught hold of his desk, to steady himself. He made his way to a small toilet-room, went in and shut the door, set the water to running in the basin, bathed his face, and head, then he squared off, and hit the wall a hard blow, with his shut fist, drawing the blood. The wall was Delano's head, in imagination. "If I were that girl's brother, I'd have it out with Delano, before I'd sleep to-night. I'd like to have the satisfaction myself, of beating him half dead, I don't know what we men are coming to. To think I had to sit there and listen to what I have just now heard, and see that poor girl humiliated before us men, in that manner, by George,

I feel like a low cowardly poltroon. If I had just myself to look out for, but there's mother, she's got to be taken care of, and it's not so easy for a fellow to get a job nowadays. And that old brute of a Waite, damn him, no decent man, ought to work for him, I won't go back there again to-day, got the headache." He put on his coat, and went out.

Delano rose from his seat, called the boy, and dispatched him for the woman who had charge of the girls' parlor and toilet rooms. He told the office boy to tell her to bring two of the work women with her. In a few moments, they were in the office, the three with the help of Delano, carried the unconscious girl, up to a small room, off the parlor, used for the sudden illness of any of the women employees. Delano, made no excuse for Nina's illness only that she had swooned, and ordered one of the women to remain with her until she recovered.

When Roscoe Delano returned to the office, Mr. Waite had not moved from his desk. As Delano approached near him, he turned round. "I was not aware that you were the man, who occupied the carriage with her," he said, looking into Delano's face, with a strange cold glitter in his deep set, whitish gray eyes. "You did not inform me as to that, it has been a very disagreeable affair, and I wish to be relieved of taking any further part in it." He rubbed his long bony hands together, stepped down from his desk, passed Delano, and left the room. Like Pilate, he wished to wash his hands of the blood of the innocent.

It was not long until the whole establishment was rife with conjectures, what could it mean to have Nina Palermo, called to the office of Mr. Waite, and in a little while carried from there in a dead swoon. About an hour after she was carried up stairs Nina regained consciousness, she tried to rise but her head fell back upon the pillow. The young girl who remained with her, brought her a cup of tea, which refreshed her greatly. She requested the girl, to fetch her hat and little silk mantle, which she carried across her arm of mornings (for the eastern climate is subject to quick and extreme changes), from one of the cupboards in the hall and lay

them upon a chair beside her, then the girl left her. She lay for two or three hours gathering her thoughts and trying to shape them into some purpose, until she felt it was growing late, and she must make an effort to rise and get away from the store.

She was very pale and quiet, as she began to dress, a little too quiet. There is something terrible in the foreboding of the calm, which succeeds a great sorrow, a great grief, that comes upon us quick as the lightning flash in the heavens, and like the thunderbolt which follows strikes us old, with years unlived. She bathed her face, and hands, combed out her long black hair, rolled it up in one large coil, on top of her head, and arranged the curls on her forehead. She then put on her hat, picked up her mantle and parasol, stole out of the room, which was in the rear of the building, and went down a long narrow passageway, with rows of little closets on each side, for the employes' hats and wraps. At the end of this long hall was a stairway, which led to one of the side streets. She went down these stairs, and passed out unnoticed, to the street, to be one more in that great army whose ranks are ever swelling as it marches on and on gathering in and ever growing wider, broader, larger.

It was midnight when she found herself, near the steps of the great house, where the carriage, had drawn up the night before, and she and Delano had gotten out. She stood looking up at the door, the windows were darkened and the blinds drawn. "This is the house, I'm sure, it seemed to stamp itself upon my memory, as I looked up at it when Delano held my hand. I knew the kind of house it was, and like some faces it left an impression on my mind never to be forgotten. Oh, Gene," she cried clasping her hands over her breast, "Oh, Gene, Gene, my brother, what will you say, what will you think, when you come to know the step I am about to take. I, your sister, your affianced bride. It will wring your heart with grief, for you loved me, with a true honest manly love. But the awful thing that I have been accused of to-day, will spread, and spread, and when it comes to your ears, which it will be sure to do

I could never make you believe, but that I have been guilty. I was out with Roscoe Delano last night until twelve o'clock, and you waited until I came home. When we married, if we ever did, this would be the shadow, that would rise up between us and darken all our lives.

"Oh no I cannot go home. Oh, my mother forgive me, for this ingratitude, forgive me for bringing this sorrow and disgrace upon your life, but that wretch Delano, must answer for it. Oh, I have grown so old,—so very old;—it seems years, since last night. And Gene, dear Gene, when you get to be that big real estate owner, that you talk so much about, I hope you will not let money harden your heart until it makes a monster out of you, instead of a man. Oh, I have grown so old,—so very old." She drew her little silk mantle up closer about her shoulders. Her face, pale as death, stood out from the brim of her black hat which framed it about. Her features were pinched, and the lips drawn tightly, as she gazed up at the house, whose door was ready to open a welcome to her knock.

"Now Roscoe Delano," she cried, raising her arms, up to the purpled jewelled dome, and with a look upon her face, a look, in which all the girl, all the womanly nature, was put aside, and which transformed her into the awful thing, such as only a man, can make of woman. A something which slays every man's body, as well as soul, that comes in her path, "as you have had no pity for me, neither shall I have pity for you. You have taken all the light, joy, and happiness, out of my young life. You have deprived me of all that is sweetest, dearest, and holiest to woman. When Gene comes to hear of this, you will have broken the heart, of a dear, brave, noble boy who loved me. From now on, as I live, I will make you suffer the tortures of the damned. Hell, and all its fiends, will be heaven to the pangs that I will make you endure, until you welcome death as a relief. And when you are dying I will stand over you, and whisper in your ear, and tell you how I hate you.

"I shall have to sell my body to you for this, but that is all such men as you care for, a woman's body. My heart and soul, will still be mine! God is just, He will

be just to me, He will be merciful and not damn me, but you are damned already. You have bartered away your soul, this morning, sold it just as Judas Iscariot sold our Lord. Oh, I have grown so old,—so—old. Yet the years are few over my head, my body is still young, and I am beautiful! Oh, Gene farewell, farewell! Oh, I have grown so old,—it seems as if I had lived years, since last night."

She buried her face in her hands. All was hushed in the square, the silence only broken now and then, by the puff and rattling up and down, of the elevated trains. The shadows of midnight, crept up and wrapt themselves about the great tall houses, which rose up like grim monsters, and seemed to close around and hedge her in, like the iron hand of destiny, which had pursued her. So we must leave her to her fate, that we can neither arrest, nor put aside.

Oh, Nina, Nina, you too must pay the penalty for the beauty which is always fatal to its owner, when poverty is its environment, unless the woman is gifted with the power of resistance, strength of character, and holds the better, and purer things of life the highest.

CHAPTER VI.

ANLACE.

A week after Nina's disappearance I took leave of Eugene Lunis and his mother. I promised them wherever I went on my travels, I would keep a strict look out for the missing girl, and forward to them any trace of her that I could glean by inquiry, or any other means which I could employ to locate her. Gene and myself had spent all of my last week in search for her. While I knew all our efforts to find her would prove futile, yet night after night found us going to every place that

he thought she would likely go to for shelter, and the day, would be breaking in the East, when our footsteps faltered upon the threshold of the hall door of the apartment house.

All the while I never lost an opportunity to dissuade him from going near Delano, until the pain in his heart, the fever in his brain, his outraged sensibilities, which rose up in just wrath against the man, who in cold blood, struck down his young sister, and affianced bride, had cooled. I led him to believe that Nina was not far away, and that she would come home sooner or later, all right, and not to bring her name, coupled with Delano's before the public, which he would have to do if he encountered Roscoe. I advised him, to go back to his work, and wait coming events, wait his time. That vengeance would be heaped on Delano's head in some other way.

So I took leave of my new found friends, poor and obscure, but truer and kinder hearts, I knew I would never meet again. They are the gems, which are to be found here and there, hidden away, in the great and crowded metropolis of the world, where people live so much to themselves. Where the struggle of life is so keen and sharpened among the poor, the working class, and the middle class, that they have no time for social intercourse, or do they desire it. So it tends to narrowness and selfishness, which helps to dry up the milk of human kindness in the heart.

It was a bright hot day, in the latter part of July, I found myself at Anlace, the country seat of John Arlington, one of New York's millionaires, and the country home of my friend and college chum, Bertram Arlington, his only son. Bertram met me at the station of the Pennsylvania Central, in the quaint old historic town of Perth Amboy, where he awaited me with a carriage.

Bertram was one year older than myself, and stood six feet in stockings, and built in proportion. He was as straight as an arrow, and graceful in all his movements. He was as dark as a Cuban, his fine head, covered with a thick shock of black hair, and carried proudly upon his splendid shoulders. The black brows

were heavy and straight, and his purpled brown eyes, glowed with a light, soft as that of a woman's. His features were strong, and well cut, and the black drooping mustaehe, gave grace to the contour of the cheek. It was the mouth which was his weak feature, though pleasing enough when smiling, showing two rows of sound regular teeth, that shone like pearls through the inky blackness of his mustache, yet there could be traced much indecision of character, to gaining the eminence to which he should have attained, with his grand opportunities, his gifts of mind, his wealth and position ; the wealth, that few American young men are born to. What might he not have achieved, in politics and statesmanship for his country, if he had only put them to use unselfishly. These were my thoughts then.

While money is good in its way, and would often help the struggling scholar, artist and literateur, yet we know it is more often a curse to young men of Bertram's temperament. Still no boy, or man, was ever more lovable, manly, courteous, big hearted, and generous. And I, who knew him best, loved him for his very failings.

The drive through the old historic town, and along the Bay, with its elegant residences, and their picturesque architecture, was delightful. Anlace is situated on the outskirts, of the old quaint town of Perth Amboy, in New Jersey, which is twenty-five miles from New York City. The house was originally one of those solidly built old mansions, and the ancestral home, of Mrs. Arlington. When her father, who had outlived her mother by two years, died, Anlace was put up for sale by the heirs, which consisted of Mrs. Arlington, and her two sisters, one a widow, living in Paris, France, the other married and living in New York City. It was bought in by Mr. Arlington for his wife. But when I first beheld it four years before it had been remodeled into its present fashion.

It stood high up facing the Bay, and surrounded by a park, of four or five acres, looking like some grand old palace, its architecture a mixture of the modern and renaissance. It had turrets, and towers, porches and

porticoes, and a great wide piazza in front, and upon the east and west side. The east side of the park, sloped down to the Bay, and ran out in a long sandy point into the water. Back of the park, were the stables and a large barn-yard, which had all kinds of the best breeds of poultry ; and back of these were the orchard, and the pasture land, where I saw some fine Jersey and Alderney cows and calves grazing. To the west were the large gardens, where were raised all kinds of vegetables, and small fruits, for the table. These were presided over by two experienced gardeners. There was also a lovely flower garden and conservatory.

The house inside was princely in its spaciousness, furnishing, and general appointments. The library was furnished in dark antique oak, the books were many, and well selected. Some choice old steel engravings, and etchings, hung in the panels, between the book-cases which were built in the wall. Some very fine pieces of Italian statuary stood about on pedestals, their whiteness standing out in bold relief, from the dark Pompeian red of the walls, and rich oriental drapery. A very fine DeHaas, hung over the carved oak mantle-piece, the red gold of the setting sun, mingling with the soft gray mist of the sea ; and gilding the topmasts, the sails, of the ships, and sloops, lying in the harbor, and the foam-crested waves, that lapped lazily the beach.

The large reception hall was Baronial, and its broad winding stairway of oak, and hard maple, carved by hand, was a delight to the artistic eye. Also its carved mantle-piece, and its combination and blending of colors, its rich hangings, its costly rugs, the natural woods, and objects of art, all showing a real genuine taste for such things. There were also many costly and rare paintings hanging on the walls in the grand drawing-rooms, both by American and foreign artists of note.

Bertram accompanied me to my room, which was on the third floor, and near his own. It was furnished in oak and blue, with windows looking north, east and west. When he had shown me to the bath-room, he left me to go to his own room. After taking a good

warm bath, I dressed for dinner, not in conventional broadcloth, but in a light gray suit, as the day was very warm. When I finished dressing I left my room, and went down stairs, and out to the front piazza, from there I strolled into the park. As I sauntered under the trees, fanning myself with my straw hat, I strayed to my right, and came upon two young girls, sitting under a group of elms, whom I knew to be Bertram's sisters. I had met them several years before, when they were young misses, fourteen and sixteen years of age, but they had since been to boarding school, and were now in society, the youngest, Maud, having made her debut the winter before.

Maud was of her mother's type of beauty, of medium height, with slender graceful figure. She had light brown hair, a fair clear complexion, with a rosy tinge to her cheeks, and features somewhat prominent for her face and height. The mouth with its red pouting lips, and fine teeth, was pleasing when she smiled, so were the large eyes of deep blue, fringed by long light lashes, but her face in repose, was hard, cold and repellent. So was her manner, and tinged with an arrogance that was not dropped even in the society of equals. She was robed in pure white, a kind of silky shimmering stuff, (poplin I believe it is called.) It was made with a surplice waist, and fleecy falling lace, which was gathered round the low neck. A rich sash of white satin ribbon, belted her slim waist, and the skirt hung in full folds, about her small feet, showing the dainty tan ties, and upon her head she wore a white shirred muslin garden hat. She was reading a book.

The older girl, sat leaning back in a chair, which was tipped against the trunk of one of the trees, and against the trunk of the other of the group, rested a handsome ladies bicycle. She was about twenty-one years of age, and I could see she was quite tall, from her long arms, and the long slim body, and her peculiar dress which revealed every curve of her limbs. A dark navy blue silk Jersey, fit tightly over her shoulders and bust, and came down over her hips. The skirt was serge of the same shade, plaited in small knife plaits, all the way

round, and came within a quarter of a yard of her ankles, showing the blue cloth leggings buttoning up at the side and over her tan shoes.

Upon her head, she wore a white sailor hat, trimmed in a wide band of white ribbon. Her hair was a lustrous black, its heavy braids bound up in coils, almost covering the back of her small shapely head. She was very dark, not the brown skin, of her brother Bertram, whom she very much resembled, but the pale swarthy dark, of a Hindoo's. The dark brows of the broad low forehead, were like straight, but delicate pencil strokes, above the eyes, which were neither black or brown, but of a deep violet gray, fringed by long black lashes, which gave a peculiar fascination to the face, more than its regular features, and pleasing expression, of intelligence, or the small teeth, that shone like rows of pearls, when the lips parted in a vivacious smile, as she spoke now and then with her sister.

I made my way to where they were seated with hat in hand, but before I had time to introduce myself, Jeanette the elder disengaged herself from her bicycle and rose. "I believe this is Mr. Osgood, Bertram's friend," she said, holding out a small well shaped hand, but as dark and swarthy as her cheek. "We are pleased to see you, be seated. This is my sister Maud, I suppose you remember her, though she was but a little girl when you were here last. I was very much taller, and would not be likely to have grown out of your remembrance. Oh, I have grown since," she said, with a merry laugh, and resumed her seat. "I think myself and Bertram, must belong to the giraffe species."

I saw she was much taller, than she appeared when seated. She was long in body, and in limb, with a sort of loose-jointed willowy grace, even in her bicycle costume, which is awkward, and unbecoming to every woman, and that every man, hates to see her wear and hates himself, for being obliged to behold her in the ridiculous garb.

"While I have not forgotten the two bright eyed school girls, whom I knew as Bertram's sisters, yet I can hardly believe that time has been so busy a sculptor,

in fashioning the two lovely women, I see before me from the little girls, I still expected to find. I am somewhat like the English sailor, who left his wife, and a little two year old child, and went to sea, on a long cruise, to foreign parts. And when he returned after fifteen years, he had in his mind, all the while the little sunny haired daughter and the young wife, who he left behind. But the young wife, had become mature and worn, from her long waiting for her husband's return, and the child of two years, had grown to womanhood.

But I unlike the sailor, the years are not so many, but that I can see the school girls, in the young ladies before me, but the sailor, could not, or would not, be convinced that it was either his wife, or his child. So becoming discontented he sailed away again."

"What a nice story," said Maud, and smiled sweetly upon me.

"Charming," rejoined Jeanette.

Then a large dog of the St. Bernard species came up, his coat was white and curly, with brown spots, brown ears, and a great shaggy brown tail, and big brown eyes. He walked up to Maud, with a stately tread, sniffed and gurgled, showed his under teeth, as he laid his head upon her lap, and looked up into her face. She patted his head, pulled his ears, and called him, her dear old Romany Rye. Then he went to Jeanette, wagging his tail vociferously, gurgled, and sneezed, and showed all his under teeth, a way he had of smiling, I suppose, and telling her how delighted he was to see her. She bent herself over, pulled his ears, patted him, on the back, and called him, the dearest old Rye in the world. "Don't you think him lovely, Mr. Osgood?" she asked, rubbing her cheek against his head.

"I think him a splendid specimen of the canine family," I answered.

"You think him just a dog," she said, giving me rather an indignant look, "but Rye is a gentleman in every sense, both in training and education, he wouldn't do a rude thing for the world, would you Rye?"

"You let him, get a glimpse of a tramp, peeping around the place, and he'll show you what fine manners

he has," said Maud, with a hearty laugh. " His good manners, will impress the tramp, to such an extent that he will never come again."

" Not if Rye, ever got hold of him, by the neck," replied Jeanette.

Seeing that I was a stranger, I thought Romany Rye, would make some manifestation by a growl or a bark, to inform me that he knew I did not belong there. But as Jeanette said, he was certainly a well bred dog. He came up close to where I was seated, but never pretended to see me, but kept up a great sniffing about my chair, my boots, and trousers legs, for a few moments. When he finished his inspection, I heard a short growl, I put out my hand to him, and called his name, he looked up in my face, gave a gurgle, such as he did with the girls, turned away, and went and laid down at Jeanette's feet.

Mrs. Arlington then made her appearance. She was the image of her youngest daughter Maud. Indeed the best description I can give of her, is Maud, grown twenty-six or seven years, older, and much stouter. She was dressed in a simple sheer organdy, of a blue ground, with much white running through it, and worn over a blue silk petticoat. A blue sash ribbon belted her waist, and white lace and ribbon trimmed the neck, and sleeves. Her beautiful and abundant brown hair, was sprinkled with gray, its thick braids, coiled high on top of her head. Upon the fingers, of her small white hands, rare and costly stones, gleamed and flashed. She welcomed me to Anlace, with a warm and kindly greeting, for one generally so cold and formal in manner.

Then Jeanette, rose and excused herself. She rolled her bicycle to another tree, about four yards away and left it leaning against its trunk, she then went into the house. It seemed that Jeanette, had been to Perth Amboy, on an errand for her mother, and had taken the ride of four miles on her wheel. She had just returned and had stopped to rest a moment under the trees with her sister, where I found her.

In a few moments we were joined by Bertram, and a

young man some three or four years older. He was nearly as tall as Bertram, but more slender, with a sort of feline grace in his every move and gesture. He was quite handsome, of the blond type, his light hair, which was cut close to his well-shaped head, had just a perceptible crinkle, one careless lock, falling over the white forehead, that was broad, and had marked ideality. The nose was straight almost Grecian in its lines, the thick golden-hued mustache drooped over the full red lips. The eyes were a deep blue, large and amorous, in expression, but a certain strength in the chin and cheek, redeemed his face from effeminancy. There was about him, an air of cool indolent sensuousness, which must have made him very attractive to women.

Bertram in introducing him, gave the name, Mr. de Coute, but he was more familiarly known among his friends, and associates, as Oswald de Coute. His father was a broker and banker, and his country seat Malmarda, joined the Arlingtons. Malmarda, was a strange name, to the people of the town, and the country farmers, but Oswald's Castle, was known to every one for miles around. After he paid his devoirs to Maud, she went into the house.

"It's been most uncomfortably wam to-day," he said, seating himself beside me on the bench, where I reclined. Bertram threw himself into a big rustic arm-chair near by. "Of all the cities, in the wide universe," he continued, "fo blistering a fellow, New Yawk, beats them all on a day, like this. A seething, zizzling, funace, is no compaison." He spoke in a cool patronizing way, drawling out his words like a young English Lord, and dropping his rs like fashionable New Yorkers, affect. He had traveled extensively, and had lived in Paris, and London, several years, while in these cities, he mixed with the best society, that is the aristocracy, and nobility, dukes, earls, and lords, spending weeks at their country houses. He was fond of sport, liked horses, and dogs, bet, played cards, and gambled. Did everything a young gentleman of fortune and leisure, feels it his privilege to do. He was the only son of his father, who was considered twice a millionaire. His

mother and one married sister, were at this time traveling in Europe.

I must have appeared decidedly crude to Oswald de Coute, quite unsophisticated, none of the *l'howme du monde*, about me, very provincial, as they would say, in the old countries, and in New York, and Boston, decidedly western. He spoke of going abroad again, in the fall, expected after spending a few weeks, in Paris, to go to the Continent, and after a short tour, to arrive in London by Christmas.

"Some delightful country houses, in England," he said. "I like Malmarda, I first opened my eyes, upon this mundane sphere, in a little room, off mother's boudoir, which overlooked the inlet, and the bend, where the fresh and salt water meet. I spent all the years of my boyhood at the old place, that was befoe fatha had it changed to the present affair, which is suggestive of nothing but la—geness. You know, my deah fellow, we a nothing in this country, if not spreading. You see," he continued, in a low voice, drawing out his words, his accent a mixture, of the Londoner, and the dropping of the rs of the New Yorker, "grandfather on father's side, was an old sea captain, and sailed to all pa—ats, of the world. Mother's fatha was a fama, and owned hundreds of acres, of land, about hea. When the old fama, went to build his new house, Captain de Coute, became the architect, at least he gave his ideas, of the castles he had seen in his foreign travels, to the architect, and between the three, the architect, sailor, and fama, they built Malmarda by the sea.

"Old Captain de Coute, was a widower, with one son, who is now my fatha, he married my mother, who was the daughter of his fatha's old friend the fama. Ten years ago, father had the old castle, turned into a modern jumble of the architecture of different times, and nations. He tried to impress upon the minds of the builders, to not lose the castle effect. But my deah fellow, they lost all trace of it, sacrificed it to modern fashion, which means nothing, to interior utility, as they say. My deah fellow, we can't build castles in

this country, a Republic if not a castle, producing nation."

"Shouldn't care to have it," I replied.

"Oh, ah," he ejaculated, his countenance changing to a set expression, as his sleepy eyes, opened wide in a more observant glance of my face.

"Be careful Oswald, my friend Osgood, here is a good deal of a radical," said Bertram, laughing. "I know him, of old, he is a Westerner, and somewhat tinged with socialism."

"Unless Bertram Arlington has changed the color of his coat, considerably since he left college, he leans decidedly that way," I replied.

"All through your influence Beverly."

"Well if it is socialism, not to believe in the few growing rich, in this country at the expense of the many. So rich that they seek to ape the nobility, and even royalty, of foreign lands. To follow these people in what is best, is all right. In their thorough training, their love of country, and national responsibilities, for there are many noble, and gifted statesmen like Gladstone, a man that the youth of all countries should try to emulate. He is a great man, what I call a whole man. It is to the old monarchial governments, we must go to learn the art of diplomacy, statesmanship, and state craft.

"But our great fault is we imitate, and follow their weaknesses, in the arrogant, and ostentatious display of money. Why no Russian Czar, ever dreamed of the wealth, controlled by a few men, right here in New York City, or has he ever used his power, or been half the despot, these men have I speak of here. Think of the charters given and granted by Congress, to corporations, by which they control, thousands and thousands of miles of railroad, sea and water routes. These are given to the few without cost, and free from taxes for years, and if they do pay takes at all they are so comparatively small, that it amounts to nothing. The laborer, mechanic, artisan, all pay tithes to them. They set the price on all the produce of our country, because they control all the roads of commerce. Do as we want

you to do, or we will close the market to you. Through these channels all the capital flows into their pockets, and England is their dumping ground.

" The government at Washington, by exempting these corporations, and combinations of men, from paying their just dues of taxation, or allowing them to exist at all, do the people a great injustice, lay burdens upon the working class that no monarchial government would think or dare to do. Besides it keeps our treasury depleted. Then the President and his cabinet, who should watch these atrocities (I call them atrocities), and prevent congress, and the senate, as much as it lies in their power from committing them, and protect the people, are as deep in the mud, as congress, and the senate, are in the mire.

" There are our farmers. In the old countries, a man owning two or three thousand acres of land, as many of our planters in the South do and more, is looked up to as the pride of a nation. He is entitled to a seat in parliament, or the house of lords, he has a title of some kind, either inherited from his ancestors, or bestowed upon him. He is the law framer, and law giver of his country, its parliaments, and legislature are mostly composed of men of his own kind, men, to the manor born, men of the soil. For years in America everything the landowner and producer raises, has the price placed on it by men, who sit in their offices in New York City, regardless of what it costs him for labor, or machinery, and to work his land. He finds at the end of the year he has nothing, that he is forced to turn to the very men who have controled the price of his produce, and mortgage his plantation, that he is owned by them, that he is virtually a serf.

" It is the same with all our small farmers, who own five or six hundred acres of land. Corporations, congress, the senate, have legislated so against them until they are so poor, the seeds that are planted, are mortgaged, before they are put in the ground, crops are sold, before they are grown, to raise money enough to till their farms. And this is more the condition of your farmers right here in the East, where small farms

abound, than with us. We can talk big about our Republic, and the rights of franchise, but let us look the truth squarely in the face. There is something radically wrong in our system of government, and wrong has been heaped upon wrong, until might and wrong, combined lays its iron hand, upon the people. I believe the very lawlessness of our suffrage, is its own tyranny."

"Allowing what you say to be true in some respects," replied Oswald de Coute, with a hard dominant contemptuous, expression, on his handsome face, and all the soft dulcet tones of his voice turned to harshness as he continued, "that it is only the few who control the industries, commerce, and finance of our country, it is only the few who are capable of controlling them. The great masses, the hosh posh, the hordes, what the French call the canaille, are not fit to govern, but must be governed. They are no more than beasts of burden, you cannot make anything else of them, they have always existed and always will."

"You both forget our great middle class," said Bertram, taking the cigar from his mouth, that he had been puffing at vigorously and stretching out his long limbs. "Why they are the bone and sinew of our land, they are its intelligence, its intellect. They compose our congress, our senate, and our presidents, and his cabinet are taken from their ranks. They compose our churches, and the preachers, and teachers, they fill our schools. They make our literature, science and art."

"It is true so far as the latter things you have just mentioned are concerned, but while our presidents in these days, may be poor, not moneyed men, they are put in by moneyed men."

"My dear fellow," said Oswald de Coute, turning in his seat, and resting his elbow on the back of the garden bench, and leaning his cheek upon the palm of his right hand, while with his left, he toyed with the button of his vest, as he remarked coldly, and with a tinge of insolent languor, "there must be something in the air out where you live, that produces radicals."

"Yes," I replied smiling, "we have plenty of room,

if that is conducive of thought. We are not so crowded, live more with nature, therefore our lives, are more wholesome. We have plains, like great lakes, billowing from one range of mountains, to the other. Miles, and hundreds of miles, of prairies, where the sky dips low, and the corn, grows tall in the sun, and the wild winds, make harps, lutes, and bass viols of its long silken fringe, and play upon them a strange weird music, such as is only known to the winds. Where the young wheat is fanned by gentle breezes, into undulating seas of bronze. We have ranges of purple hills, kissed by silvery sheened clouds. Productive valleys, where farm houses, nestle amidst great forest trees, and white sheep graze in green meadows. Shining rivers, that wind through vale and dell, on and on to the sea. Our cities are not so large as yours in the East, and I hope they never will be. I do not believe in crowding people, if it is not good for cattle, it is not good for man. I believe with Lord Lytton, in his 'Coming Race,' no town or city should have more than twelve thousand inhabitants, and with Mathew Arnold, 'That there is danger of us becoming simply a nation in numbers.' "

"These are the dreams of an idealist," said Bertram, "they are not practical, they can never be realized. You can see here in our own Republic, which is founded upon the principles, of the freedom and rights to all men, that the tendency, is just the opposite. We crowd, and crowd, our cities, with people of every nation under the sun, and each year, the rich grow richer, and the poor poorer."

"It's all foolishness Beverly, you will just waste your time."

"My dear boy, I am not the first man, who has tried to benefit his race, who has been told it was useless, that they threw away their lives. If it were not for the ideals, where would the human race be to-day?"

"Sunk, sunk, as you say," replied Bertram, rising, and thrusting his hands down in his pockets, he began to walk up and down in front of us.

"I do not claim to have any special mission," said, Oswald de Coute, in the laziest of drawls. "I am no

refoma. The cranks who keep up such a deuced fuss, about the rights of man, and all that sort of thing, do so, because they have a screw loose somewhere. Of course, I believe in my country, and the right of suffrage to all, and men's privileges, but things adjust themselves, without all this eternal clatter. But in feeling, and at heart, I am an aristocrat."

We were then joined by Mr. Arlington, who shook hands, with myself and de Coute. He gave me a very cordial welcome to Anlace. He was over fifty years of age, tall and dark, like his son, Bertram, but stout, and florid, a typical New Yorker. Hard cold, money lover, yet pleasant affable, and hospitable, to his equals. He also loved, what men of his kind call the good things of life, the flesh pots of Egypt. Then it was not long until the butler announced dinner.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DINNER AND OTHER GUESTS.

Mrs. Arlington, Maud, Jeanette, and a young Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, stood in the reception hall, Mrs. Arlington, wore the same dress as in the garden, so did Maud. But Jeanette was so completely metamorphosed, so unlike any of the other women, more like some oriental princess, brought by the touch of a magic wand, from her far-off Indian plains, or from the Himalaya mountains, and set down in our midst.

Her dress was of light sea-green silk, which swept the floor in a long train. The bodice was tight fitting, and covered with thin black silk netting, so were the sleeves, that came just below the elbow. The neck was in surplice fashion, and had soft white ruching inside, of the silk and lace, the sleeves were lined with the same, with ruffles of lace falling down to the wrist, and upon the

left of her corsage, she wore a big bunch of natural deep red roses. The thick braids of her lustrous black hair, were coiled high up around her small beautifully shaped head, and fastened there with a comb of pearls, a large diamond, sparkling here and there, between the pearls. Her small brown hands were laden with gems, which flashed and scintilated, as she waved a dark red satin fan, painted all over with bright humming birds. And peeping from under her dress skirt, which showed its white satin ruching around the bottom, was her shapely foot, shod in a dainty shoe, of light shade. She stood by her mother's side, and was head and shoulders taller. I could not keep my eyes from wandering in her direction, she was so natural, so willowy and graceful, so perfectly unconscious of her attractions, so artistic in her taste and actions, and everything she did, that I could not believe but what she belonged to our Southwest, and not a child of the cold North.

I did not fall in love with her, but I admired her greatly, and it did not take me long to see where her preference lay, for in a moment Oswald de Coute was at her side. I could see that she was very much in love with him, that she gave him a fresh pure girl love, the sweetest, and most beautiful thing man can possess.

Oswald de Coute had little or no appreciation of such a girl as Jeanette Arlington, and her love. They had grown up side by side, since babyhood. He was nine years old when she came out of her dark shell, and opened her eyes to the light of this world. In the course of time, the boy went to college, coming home every few weeks for a visit. After leaving college, he went abroad, and was gone four years. It was when he returned from this long absence, that a marriage was thought of between them, by the parents on both sides. Oswald, tired of his four years of dissipation abroad, found in his early child companion, the lovely fresh innocent country girl of sixteen. He was constantly by her side, the long summer days, and when they parted in September, she to go to Vassar, and he back to spend the winter in London, they were betrothed. Since then he had gone and come several times, never staying longer than a summer

or a winter. De Coute, in these seven years, had many an *affaire d'amour*, and wasted on less attractive, less moral women, the love he should have kept sacred, and given in its fullness and entirety, to this high born, high minded, and high spirited girl, the woman who was soon to be his wife.

Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, was a dashing New York society woman. She was not more than twenty-five or six. Her husband, Mr. Leroy Johnathan, was a quiet cold mannered, light complexioned man of forty years, or a little over. He wore glasses, and was supposed to have extensive business relations with Mr. Arlington. Mrs. Leroy, had little natural beauty, but made the best of her physical deficiencies, as only a New York woman can. She was of the blonde type, her hair, of that wooden brown shade, was tinted to the most lovely Titian gold. She wore it waved upon the forehead, and drawn up from the nape of the neck, and wound in a Grecian knot, at the crown of the head. Her eyes, were small and of a light blue, with a greenish tinge to the iris. Her features were somewhat large, and irregular, but full of mobility, the mouth sensual, vivacious, but showing two rows of small white even teeth.

She was an exquisite dresser, and on this evening wore a long white silken robe, that shimmered under some kind of thin silken gauze. The bodice was made of the silk, cut very low, and showed no reluctance to the display of personal charms. But the gauze covered the corsage, and was drawn up full in surplice fashion, over the neck, which relieved it of bareness or vulgarity. Clasping her white throat, was a necklace of pearls and diamonds, and upon her wrists she wore bracelets of the same, while her small dimpled hands were laden with gems.

She was a great talker, it seemed to me she lived to talk, to laugh, to giggle, would be a better word, for a good laugh, once in a while is a very wholesome, and desirable thing. She lived to eat, to sleep, to enjoy all the things pertaining to the flesh, and the senses, and above all, gentlemen's society. She was dull and lagging in her own sex's company, and would mope, and yawn, and

hardly ever open her mouth, unless compelled, to avoid appearing rude or too stupid. She had no interest in the things bright women have apart from men, as men do from women. But when a man appeared on the scene, she was all smiles, poses, and vivacity. She charged her batteries, and spread before him all her charms. She was the one, the only one, he must dare to pay court to.

On being presented to her, she gave me a quick sweeping glance, that was meant to measure me externally, from the crown of my head to the sole of my boot. And when our eyes met, hers dilated with a steel-like glitter, while the green overspread the pupil. She was quick to see that I was in no sense game for her ammunition, and it would be useless for her to waste it upon a sober fellow like me. There was also a questioning in it, she did not know just where to place me. I was a gentleman, of course, or I would not be a guest at Anlace. But did I represent family or money?

We spoke with each other but a few minutes, but in that few minutes, I caught another glance of her eye, in which I read volumes. It was directed upon Jeanette and Oswald de Coute. Jeanette had taken him by the arm, and led him to a small escritoire, which stood in a corner of the reception hall near the mantel-piece, on which were some pieces of finely painted china. They were by some famous artist in that line. She held in her hand a small plate, and was speaking earnestly to him about it. I learned afterwards it was one she had painted herself, after one of the artists. I who claim to have the gift of seeing, saw that her glance boded no good to the lovely Jeanette. It told me that de Coute and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, were no strangers to each other, and that he had been playing with fire.

Then the butler appeared in the hall, and Mr. Leroy Johnathan, and Mrs. Arlington led the way to the dining-room. Jeanette and de Coute, Mr. Arlington and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, Maud and myself, and Bertram, followed behind. Mr. Arlington took the head of the table, and Mrs. Arlington, the foot. Bertram seated himself at his father's right, Mrs. Leroy between Bertram

and her husband, Maud was seated to her mother's left, and I at her right. The dining-room was at the end of the reception hall, upon the west side. It was large and spacious, and as Baronial in appearance as the hall.

The floor, wainscoting, and all the woodwork, were of the same hard maple and oak, with the natural grain of the wood showing. The table was elegant in all its appointments, freighted with solid silver, and cut glass, rare French china, and Irish linen damask, that looked like satin, and was as soft to the touch. It was served by two men, one of them the butler, in full dress; his assistant was attired more plainly, and both were Englishmen.

The dinner was not over sumptuous, but consisted of six or seven courses. The gentlemen all drank a great deal. Mr. Leroy preferred pale English ale. It comes in small bottles, and when uncorked sizzles and sparkles, like champagne. Mr. Leroy Johnathan, had his glass filled with ice, and the ale poured into it. He quaffed off several glasses one after another, as though his insides were very dry, and hadn't had a wetting since morning. Mr. Arlington, seemed to enjoy his glass also, but his potion was wine, California port. So did Bertram, which pained me to see, and de Coute, while Mrs. Leroy was not far behind. Maud left her claret untasted, so did Jeanette. Mrs. Arlington, barely touched hers. I, who am prosy enough to try to be temperate in all things, left my glass untouched, but drank my coffee, when we came round to that course. I do not just admire the way they serve dinner in the large fashionable houses in New York, from the side-board. It may be English, and considered just the thing, but no matter how good your cook is, the meats and vegetables get cold, and by the time they come to your plate, and handed to you, they are cold and flabby. My coffee was made of the best Java and Mocha, and was served exquisitely, in the finest French china, with rich yellow cream, but it was lukewarm, and had lost all its flavor. At home aunt Lucy poured uncle's coffee and mine from the pot, in which it was made, and such coffee, just like amber. My — I smack my lips now over the memory of it.

While at table, Oswald de Coute, presented a new phase of his character. At times he was languidly droll, at others, if addressing Bertram or myself, and especially Mr. Leroy Johnathan, I observed a tendency to bite, whenever a chance presented itself. Then again he was quick at repartee, saying some good things. These were generally addressed across the table, to Mrs. Leroy, who had donned all her armor, and sat ready with lance and shield, to spar, and parry, any stroke that came her way. She smiled, smirked, chatted, and chattered, and talked back, as the Irishman said about his wife, when he struck her, that she gave him too much back gab. And Mrs. Leroy, hit more often than she missed, as the blood leaped to her delicately rouged cheeks, and dyed them a deep red, her eyes fairly blazed, as she addressed her retorts to Oswald or Bertram.

Jeanette talked little, but well. There was a womanly dignity about her that I liked, aside from her education, and the advantages of wealth and position, she had a good mind, and for her age, it was well stored. She possessed also a reserve, a delicacy, which greatly pleased me. Mrs. Arlington, while a splendid hostess, was cold and formal in manner. She never lacked in attention to her guests, but the ice was never broken, or for a moment thawed. Whether in the seclusion of her own apartments, with no one but her own family about her, she was more warm, and affectionate to her husband and children, I cannot say. But she was snobbish to a degree that surprised me, and is not in keeping with the society of a republican country. Whether this has come in the last twenty years, by the accumulation of vast wealth, in the hands of the few, or whether the apeing of foreign customs, in the governing of their domestic life, produces this kind of Americans is undecided; also to what it will tend to is left for the thinker to warn.

After dinner we strayed here and there, about the house. I was thrown again a few minutes with Jeanette. I found she had quite a taste for Art. "Father," she said (she called Mr. Arlington father, which I liked to hear, as most girls of her age, say Papa.) "Father indulges me in my study of Art, so does Bertram. I not

only enjoy and love pictures, but I love to draw and sketch from nature. Clarise and myself, have delightful times together, when we go off on long sketching trips. We go on our bicycles, and when we see some sky, or cloud effect, we stop and make a study of it, right there and then. The same with water, barn and tree, or any tumble-down thing, in shadow. Clarise is quicker to see the picturesque than I. I learn lots from her, she's just full of ideas, and you know there is nothing so rare as ideas. It's only the few, who are gifted with ideas, and when the few impart them, the world of people steal them, and they become common property, and the few who think them out, get no credit for them. That is what I do with Clarise, unconsciously of course. She gives me so many points upon this and that, and splendid suggestions, and I make use of them like other plagiarists." She laughed low.

And while she spoke, she was all movement, her long limp body, seemingly to have no bones. Her silken drapery rustling and shimmering with every bend and sway she made, while her fan, like some gay bird of plumage, with wings outspread, floating up and down, to and fro, with every incline and decline of her figure. Oh, she was a picture never to be forgotten, and in her intellect and womanly delicacy, that added to a charm which was indefinable; she was a lovely girl, a delightful creature, wealth, family, position, had not spoilt her.

"Clarise and myself are great chums. Surely you must have met Clarise Cline when you were here before. Professor Cline's daughter, Professor of Languages, at Yale."

"When I was here before, Professor Cline had not left the college, and I believe Mrs. Cline and little daughter, were not at home."

"Since then Clarise has lost her mother, she died about three years ago. Clarise, was at Vassar with me when word came of her mother's illness, she is a little older than Maud. She has quite a passion for Art; last winter she and myself, took lessons in New York, from Inneze, and we had splendid times, we enjoy each other's society

exceedingly. You must be presented to Clarise, she is one of us, Maud and myself look upon her as our sister."

"If she is as lovable as her father, I shall be pleased and gratified to meet her," I replied, "all the boys loved Professor Cline. He had a way of gaining their respect as well as their admiration, besides he was a great linguist, Greek was my *bete noire*, but many a time he helped me through."

Then she went to her *escritoire*, where stood the rare pieces of painted china, opened it and drew from it a portfolio, and took from it several small sketches. Some were in pencil, others in water colors, and a few pen and ink etchings. They were all views about Anlace, and were mostly from points where the sea came in, and were quite meritorious, and showed good feeling, and an eye for color and distances. I complimented her upon her talent, and hoped she would continue to improve her spare moments in that way, and added, "That even the pursuit of the beautiful, was an enjoyment in itself."

"Indeed," she answered, "I cannot tell you how absorbed I become, when out sketching. Sometimes Clarise and myself, spend whole days in outdoor sketching." We were then joined by Oswald de Coute, who left Bertram, Maud, and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan sitting at the upper end of the hall. "I am showing Mr. Osgood my sketches, he was so enthusiastic over the De Haas, and that pasture scene with the sheep, by Clopstein, that I thought he might be pleased to see some of my efforts." She looked up at him with a smile, it was then I saw the love-light in her eyes. Those strange deep fascinating eyes. Well one could not blame her, he was a handsome, high-bred, aristocratic looking young man, with wealth, and good family to back him, and that was all.

"Yeas, a charming way of amusin one's self," he said, gliding into a chair, which stood near by. "You'll find Miss Jeanette a deucedly cleva, Osgood. Clever in everything she does. There's not a girl in all New Yawk, or the whole county around Anlace, can ride ah, bicycle equal to her. Bertram and myself are away off, you know, when it comes to those sort of things, I make no pretensions to being cleva. I ride no hobbies, I can ride

a good horse, as well as any man, and have one of the finest saddle-hoses in the country. I was considered by Captain Mortland, of her Majesty's Dragoons, to be as good a rider, as in the whole regiment, young Lord Mortland was the best hoseback rider in England. I like a horse, of flesh and blood, better than your beastly bicycles, that are ready to trip a fellow up, or turn him over any moment by something coming undone, and getting out of gear. A man can love his horse, but he can't have any fellow-feeling for a thing of iron."

"I love my bicycle," said Jeanette, placing her sketches back in the *escrioire*, and locking the door. "I love Jumpy, he seems all alive to me, we have such good times together, such nice long strolls, and he requires so little attention. Oh, yes I have a great liking for Jumpy."

"I suppose you will consider me a very slow fellow, I have never yet ridden your iron horse, I must get me one when I return home."

"You must by all means learn to ride a bicycle, Mr. Osgood. You don't know what you miss, and they are so handy and useful," replied Jeanette, rising from the rug, where she had squatted in Turkish fashion, her long robes not seeming to interfere with the grace of her position.

"I would by all means, my dear fellow. I don't like the beastly things myself, but I can ride one. I don't pretend to be clever, but I like sport of all kinds. I can handle an oar, too, still I like my horse best. My friend Lord Mortland, owned the finest saddle horse in all England, she was of Moorish blood, but I didn't consider her any better or handsomer than my brown Betty."

"Or my star-eyed Bob," said Jeanette, with her arm leaning on the top of the big upholstered chair, where De Coute's head reclined.

"You should visit the far West, or Texas, there you would have plenty of room to display your skill in horsemanship. Nothing can compare with a Texan in horseback riding, he will jump upon a mustang bare-back, and away he'll go, and the old boy himself couldn't catch him, or outride him, unless some other Texan, more skilled than he. Bertram has promised me to soon pay me a

visit. If you and Mr. De Coute could make it convenient to come at the same time, I would like to have you. I can arrange it to make the trip through some of the western and southwestern states, making a specialty of Texas. Such a trip would be delightful."

As I said this, my glance happened to rest upon Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, where she sat with the others. A pillar, jotting out from the wall where the hall arched, partially hid me from their observation, but it in no way obstructed my full view of the group. As I looked again Mrs. Leroy's face was turned towards us and her eyes rested upon Jeanette, who still stood by Oswald's side, leaning over the back of his chair, where his head reclined. He had one hand raised holding hers. It was fierce, vindictive, full of scorn and hate. But in a moment Bertram spoke to her, and she turned to him, all smiles, and chatted a second or two, but her glance came back again to Oswald and Jeanette; then she rose quickly and came over to where we were seated.

Jeanette, at the request of Oswald, who a second before had asked her to sing, left us and went into the drawing-room, where the grand piano stood, I rose and followed after. She asked me what I liked, if I had any favorite song, and it came within her range of music, she would be happy to sing it for me. I picked up a book of old songs that lay on the piano, and began to turn the leaves, when my eyes rested upon that poem, more than song. "Douglas tender and true," dear to the heart of every woman who has loved and lost either lover or husband, who was to her a "Douglas tender and true." I placed it before her, and when she saw the heading, she looked up at me and smiled. "'Douglas' is a favorite song of mine, I am so pleased you like it."

"It was a favorite song of my mother's," I answered. "For years, after my father died, just as the dusk of the evening stole on, after reading to me an hour or so, she would seat herself at the piano, and sing this beautiful poem of Miss Muloch's, while I would come from any part of the house I happened to be in when I heard mother's voice, go noiselessly into the drawing-room, throw myself into a big chair, and sit until she finished."

Jeanette's voice was a full rich soprano, with sweet and varied tones. She sang "Douglas" with much feeling and expression for a young girl, and had a fine appreciation of its beautiful words and sentiments. She sang several other songs, some new and some old, and a few selections from *Somnambula*. These were my choice and she humored me. Maud then joined us; she did not sing, but she played finely on the guitar and violin. We left the drawing-room, and as we passed through the reception hall, to go to the porch, Mrs. Leroy Johnathan and De Coute were standing in a recess made by a pillar of an arch, and the large folding doors, leading into the drawing-room. She was chatting gaily to him, her head and her fan keeping pace with her tongue, in their gesticulations. De Coute was laughing heartily at her chatter.

I followed after Maud and Jeanette. Mrs. Arlington was sitting alone, and Mr. Arlington and Mr. Leroy were walking in the park, smoking cigars. As Jeanette stepped out upon the piazza, she looked all about her, and an expression of disappointment came into her face, when she saw no one but her mother. She must not have seen De Coute with Mrs. Leroy in the reception hall, and expected to find him on the piazza. After speaking a few words of endearment to their mother, the two sisters went down the steps to the park. I brought a chair from the upper end of the porch, where there were several, and seated myself near Mrs. Arlington, to have a few moments chat with her.

She seemed pleased with this little act of attention, and made herself quite gracious to me. She hoped that I would not consider this going off to herself, any negligence of her guests. "I like to be alone a little while," she said, "it rests me. Young people generally amuse themselves, I don't care to leave them too long, but a quarter or half an hour stolen this way, does me lots of good, and I am not missed. Lately I leave much of the entertaining to Jeanette and Maud. Jeanette, I must say, is peculiarly gifted in that way. Since she first made her *début* in society, she has been a favorite with everybody, high and low, rich and poor. There is not a work-

man on the place, nor a tradesman in Amboy, nor a farmer, for miles around Anlace, but knows Jeanette and Clarise Cline. They are great favorites also with their wives and children. Jeanette and Clarise know no social distinction, when it comes to worth. I take no credit for this, they are girls with minds of their own, they are what men call advanced girls."

"I should think you would be proud of such a daughter as Jeanette. Women born to wealth and position, are seldom original thinking women or have minds broad enough to grasp the different phases of human life, or measure the worth of the individual, aside from place, wealth and position. To be able to see and appreciate worth in the humble and lowly walks of life, is a divine gift."

"Yes, I admire and respect all these things, and I love Jeanette for being the girl she is, but I fear I cannot reach so high. I have the old English Puritan blood in my veins; you see my daughter Maud and myself are very much alike. If we were left to ourselves, we would be arbitrary in drawing the social lines, and I fear they would be narrow and tight. Jeanette is like her father and Bertram and her father and brother will miss her greatly. She is going to leave us in the Fall, she and Oswald are to be married early in October, and go abroad for the winter."

"I can sympathize with you for her loss, while I congratulate De Coute on gaining such a prize for a wife. She is a gem, a pearl of priceless value, I hope he thinks of her as such," I answered sadly.

"I thank you," she replied, after a pause of some moments, as if my words had touched a key that gave forth discord. Yet there was no way of turning it to the harmony it disturbed. "Oswald and Jeanette have been brought up side by side, since they were babies, they have loved each other from childhood, and have been engaged for four years. They are to return next Spring, and his mother and sister are to be here in September for the wedding. Malmarda is to be put in readiness during the winter, and they are to reside there, with Captain and Mrs. de Coute. Jeanette would not be happy

to live away from her father and myself, and her home. When they return in the Spring, Oswald is to go into his father's bank, so I shall have my daughter near me."

Then we heard Mr. Arlington's voice calling to his wife. She rose, saying "I believe the girls have gone down to the Bay with Bertram, supposing you take a walk down that way, I think you will find them," and excusing herself, she left me.

It was now dark outside. I rose and went into the hall for my hat. A soft dim light came from a large bronze lamp upon the lower post of the stairway. Thinking I was all alone in that part of the house, and feeling the sense of its spaciousness, its elegance, the beauty of its color and furnishing, its paintings and art objects, and over all the soft shadowy light, I thrust my hands down in my trousers pockets and in a dreamy way, began to pace the floor, up and down. Straggling into the grand salon, and walking down half its length, I heard the sound of voices, in a low conversation, then I caught sight of two figures in an alcove, made by an arch and a bay-window, which looked east upon the park and the Bay. Oswald de Coute was standing by the side of Mrs. Leroy Johnathan. He had his arm about her waist, and was speaking in a low, but vehement way. On discovering them, I started back a pace or two with surprise, then stood still, unable to move for a second. But recovering myself, I hurried as fast as my feet could carry me, to the upper end of the drawing-room, my steps falling noiselessly on the thick Turkish carpet and rugs.

I went into the hall, and from there out upon the porch, there was no one to be seen. I then went down the steps, and into the park. As I made my way east to the side of the house, I saw the outlines of several figures, sitting under the trees, where I first discovered Maud and Jeanette in the afternoon, and heard the sound of their voices in pleasant conversation. I did not stop, but sauntered on down the path to the gate that led to the road.

What had I stumbled on, I thought to myself; surely in the gilded halls and palaces of the rich and cultured, there is no excuse for double lives, closets where dark

secrets are kept, ah, yes a decaying putrid corpse, hidden away, locked and bolted. Surely Oswald de Coute, from his loving attitude, was on more intimate terms with Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, than that of friendship, or the mere social acquaintance of those in the same set, who meet often or casually, in the social world.

But I must stop, the seer is not so privileged with his gifted eyes, to at any time draw the curtain aside, showing the bare, and naked truths, the smirched souls, the black spots and sores that fester beneath purple and fine linen. Mrs. Leroy Johnathan was a great lady, one of New York's social queens. I opened the gate and passed out. It was a lovely clear night, a delicious breeze came up from the sea, and stirred the leaves of the trees to soft lullabys ; through their interstices I caught a glimpse of the Bay, glistening like a silver bow, setting low in the horizon, and underlined by its white sandy beach. To my left lay the Inlet, its opposite shore dotted with cottages. I turned towards the town, above me was the purple heavens, studded with millions of scintillating stars, my ears filled with the gentle whisperings of the oaks and maples, the lip and lap of the waves, the flutter of sails, like the whr-r-rr of unseen angel wings, and the echoing voices, which lent charm and mystery to the summer night, all blending in a rythm of harmony, like the sweet melody of a song, and my swelling heart responded.

I had not gone far, when I saw about a hundred paces before me the light of a cigar, and coming towards me, a tall man. As I drew nearer I discovered it was Bertram, as he approached closer, he shouted, "By George, if it isn't Beverly. I thought I was coming face to face with some dangerous tramp. And I began to feel in my pocket for my whistle, but from some peculiar movement of yours, I recognized you."

"And I knew that six feet in socks of yours, as you turned the little bend in the road."

"Lately there have been a number of tramps sneaking around here. We never used to have anything of that kind until the last year or two. The sailors used to come and go, and sometimes at night keep up a

great racket, but they would never molest anybody. If I should blow this whistle, anywhere within the hearing of the dogs, they would come tearing and snarling, leaping over hedges and fences, and I pity the man in sight."

"I have had a narrow escape then" I said, laughing heartily.

"I never blow it until I am sure of harm, there are generally two men, one a confederate, I could easily handle one man, you know. I am a good boxer, and a full blow from this arm out upon the head, there wouldn't be much sense left in his cranium. But when tramps hear the whistle, they know it means dogs, and the dogs send them a flying, and there is no harm done. Knowing your propensity, Beverly, to wander off by yourself at night, I must give you a whistle, you must arm yourself, old fellow."

"I will be glad of a whistle, but not any other weapon of defense, I never carry firearms of any kind. Of course you know, it's not that I am cowardly, but sometimes we are hasty when we have them about us, and men have been known to use them, when afterwards it has been a life-long regret to them," I answered.

"I will have to beg your pardon, Beverly, for leaving you to-night. I knew you would be well taken care of by mother and the girls. I had an engagement at old Professor Cline's this evening; he is home from Yale, and is going to remain home all summer. His cottage is about a mile from here, below us, overlooking the Inlet, a romantic old place, and made more so by one of the sweetest and dearest of girls in all the United States. You must meet her, Beverly, but I warn you, beforehand," and he gave a big hearty laugh, "I will give you leave to admire her, but you must stop there," and he laughed again.

"That isn't fair, Bertram," I replied, enjoying his bantering, "to bring a fellow among all these lovely girls, and expect him to remain heart whole and fancy free. I am not a stick or a stone, any more than yourself. There is your sister, the queenly Jeanette, with her warm, Oriental beauty; I learned from your mother, to-

night, she was engaged to Oswald de Coute, and is to be married to him in October."

"Yes, Jeanette has been romantically in love with Oswald from childhood. To be candid with you, Beverly, if I had anything to say in the matter, he would not be my choice of a husband for my sister, but women will have their way. They have been engaged nearly four years. I hope you have not allowed yourself to be hit there. Although you would be my choice Beverly, just the man to appreciate Jeanette and make her happy. She's my favorite sister, and a splendid girl. Maud is a nice girl too but cold and formal; the men don't take to her.

"She is a charming girl, very retiring, but with her good looks, family and big fortune, she will have her pick and choice of a husband." We had come to an old log, that lay near the bank, it had been brought there and placed under a tree, whose branches overhung the beach. We lighted our cigars, and sat down upon it for a chat, and a social smoke.

"I am going to give myself plenty of time to think about marrying," said Bertram musingly, "I intend to open a law office in New York, this Fall. Jeanette goes abroad for the winter, but is expected to return in the Spring, and Oswald intends to settle down and go into his father's bank."

"And when I go back home, I will take up journalism as a profession, I like it better than law."

So we sat and talked, while the waves lipped and lapped against the beach. The trees sighed and soighed above our heads, and the Bay lay like a shimmering anchor, with one arm dipped in the sea, the other seemingly cleft in the low horizon. Above its line, was a long streak of light, and over it were large dark clouds looking like islands dotting a golden green lake. White wings darted in and out, from reefs and crags, and with a dip, and a swipp, a flutter and a whir-r-rrr, glided past us. All about us was the night, the beautiful night, with its jewelled heavens, its hushed voices, its low murmurings, its twinkling lights and deep shadows, and cool winds. I spoke to Bertram of his future, his ability,

his talents, and his great opportunity to make use of them. "Take up your country's cause," I said, "work for its freedom, for just and equitable laws for all men. Our Republic has come to mean, where there is not license, worse despotism, than any monarchial government. You know how corrupt the republic of Rome became, and the cause of its downfall. To-day most of our Congressmen, and all of the Senate, instead of being a body of patriotic and just law-makers, working singly for their country's good, turn the white Capitol into a den of gambling merchants, who reduce our farmers and working people to the condition of serfs, and make laws to favor foreign and home trusts, and raffle them to the highest bidder. There are a few men, now and then sent to Congress and the Senate, who fight valiantly for the people's best interest, but they are so few they don't count. The first thing you do when you enter the race, is to lay all selfish considerations aside; if you for a moment allow them to influence you, you are lost. You will have to fight, if you are on the right, long and hard, fight until the end. If you do you will win a name that will never die."

He rose up, took his cigar from his mouth, threw back his shoulders as if I had given new impetus to his resolutions. "You are right Beverly, you are always right," he said, brushing the ashes from his cigar, "but when you go west and take up journalism, suppose you differ from me in your politics, what then?"

"We are of the same political views now, as we have been all through our acquaintance. If you fight for right and justice, and oppose the combination, and concentration, of the few, to oppress the many, we will be in harmony though we may differ on party lines."

We had reached the gate, went in and walked up the carriage drive to the house. There was no one to be seen about, all the family and guests, must have retired to their rooms. We entered a side door, that opened into a wide hall, which ran across the reception hall, to the east side. Here was seated an elderly man, who Bertram addressed as Dan; he was the watchman, an old retainer of the family. He rose up when we entered

and greeted us both, Bertram asked him if his mother had retired.

"The mistress is in her room, I believe," he answered, and began locking up. When we reached the second landing of the stairs, Bertram bid me good-night. "I always stop a moment in mother's rooms, before going to my own; it's just eleven o'clock, I think I hear my sisters' voices. It's the family meeting place, Beverly, before we turn in for the night."

CHAPTER VIII.

A MORNING WITH CLARISE.

The night was so deliciously cool, that I slept its whole long hours through, without waking until I was aroused by a knock at my door. It is my custom before retiring to pull the curtains of my windows up to the very top, so as to admit the light of the night in my room, for the night, has a light of its own, which has a great charm for me, and I love it. I generally rise of summer mornings by daybreak, and draw down the blinds, and partially close the inside shutters, so I can sleep until my hour for rising, but this morning I snoozed on, until awakened by the rap on my door.

I turned over, and took my watch from under my pillow, to see the time. It was a quarter past six, I rose, slipped on my pants, and went to the northeast window, and looked out. A luminous silvery mist, hung low over the Bay, which caught all the opal and golden tints of the sky in its ripples. To my right in the distance lay the old town of Perth Amboy, nestling in the sunshine, the haze massing and blending the houses, buildings, the schooners, sailboats, and yachts, that anchored near the beach, until it seemed to my imagination it was Venice, rising out of the sea. A little beyond were the

green flats of the Jersey shore, and to my left was Staten Island. The cool breeze swept up to my cheek, fresh with the smell of salt water, the scent of sea-weed and sand blossoms.

I left the window, and began to dress. When I finished my toilet, I went down stairs and out to the piazza. I had just seated myself upon one of the rustic chairs, when Mr. Arlington came from the east side of the house, with a bundle of newspapers in his hand, and several under his arm. He came up the steps of the porch ; after the usual good morning, and other casual remarks, about it going to be a hot day in the city, and so on, he drew up a chair, and seated himself beside me. He wore a black coat of some thin kind of stuff and trousers and vest, of light linen crash, fresh from the laundry.

" You see we are early risers in the country " he said, throwing the papers on the floor of the porch, at his feet. " You wouldn't believe that I have been over the whole estate, this morning, and have spoken with every employee upon it, and left him his orders for the day. Of course," he continued picking up one of the newspapers from the floor, and opening it, " the Madame has her say, and her way with things too. I never infringe on her rights, what pleases her and the children, pleases me. But there are things, that she leaves entirely to me to look to. I do this every morning before breakfast, there is not a man employed on this estate that works harder than I.

" Then I take the eight-thirty train to New York, arrive at my office a little after nine, look after my clerks there for an hour or two. After that I am generally called here and there, to different parts of the city, get down town to lunch about two, and to my office again at half after two, work until four then leave for home. You see what a routine it is."

" Great possessions require much care," I replied. " You will have to harness in Bertram, but I believe his desire is to practice law."

" I prefer to have him," he answered shaking out his paper, and running his eyes down its columns, " he can

help me much better as an attorney, than in any other capacity." Then he asked me many questions about the West, and my own city, and the value of good real estate there, and the loaning and investing of money in it. All of which I answered to the best of my ability, with my limited experience and knowledge of such things. He looked at me keenly and wondered if I were feigning indifference, or was it stupidity in me that I should show so little interest in the main chance, that of making money. And as I went on talking about this and that, there was contempt, expressed in every feature of his face, to think that I was so indifferent to the subject, that he had put all the energy of his life into, and which was the aim and end of his existence.

Then he gave some advice about business, and how to succeed in making money. I listened attentively to him, and of course sided with him. But my thoughts and my aims, ran in another direction. I do not mean to say, that money rightly handled, and used so as to be a benefit to mankind, is not a great blessing, but I would make it my servant, and not my master. So far in my own life, the necessity of earning money, had not fallen to my lot. My wants which were never extravagant, had always been supplied by my uncle. So I placed no particular value on the article, only so far as to carry out the bent of my inclinations.

The butler then announced breakfast. I found all the other members of the family in the reception hall. Bertram came down the stairs, as I entered. Jeanette wore a white morning robe, of some gauzy material, soft and clinging in drapery. Maud also wore white. Mrs. Leroy Johnathan a robe of pale blue, with creamy lace and ribbons. Mrs. Arlington wore white also. Oswald de Coute was not present, he went home to Malmarda, every night.

After breakfast, which I enjoyed more than the dinner of the evening before, as the coffee was delicious, and hot, Jeanette proposed a visit to Professor Cline's and an hour later we started. Jeanette, Maud, Bertram and myself. The girls went on before, Bertram and I following on after. The walk was delightful, with the

cool sea breeze fanning our cheeks, and the long shadows, thrown across the road by the elms, oaks, and maples, and the sweet songs of the birds in their branches, made my heart as glad as all nature around me.

The professor's cottage was nearer the town of Amboy, and more likely two miles from Anlace than one, as Bertram had said in our talk on the beach, the evening before. It stood nearing the end of the long avenue, that ran alongside the Bay, and upon the bend of a small Inlet. It was a picturesque modern built cottage, painted a dark reddish brown, with gables, and dormer windows in the gables of the second story. The first story had low windows, and lovely wide porches all around it. It stood considerable distance back from the water, and was surrounded by a park of two or three acres. Tall elms and beeches shaded its lawn, which was enclosed by hedges. Flowers and plants bloomed everywhere in tubs and pots, vines and honeysuckles trailed over the side fences, and the railings and posts of the front porch, were radiant with the color and perfume of the pink and white roses that climbed up and wound their tendrils about them. This was Professor Cline's home.

At Cambridge during the winter months, when his wife lived, he had rooms and board with a widow of one of Yale's old professors, but Mrs. Cline came back to her home early in the spring, leaving Clarise, with the widow and her father, until the summer months' vacation. The professor felt Clarise could not be taken from her studies, and Mrs. Cline remained until late in the fall. As we approached the house, I saw standing in the front yard, half way between the porch and the gate, a young girl. She was of medium height, and clad in a pale pink dress. Upon her head, she wore a white shirred muslin garden hat. The reddish brown of the house, the green of the vines and the trees, made a dark background which threw out her slender figure into bold relief. As we drew nearer, and she caught sight of Jeanette and Maud, she came down to the gate, and received the girls, with a kiss and an embrace. Bertram

walked in as one perfectly at home, making some bright remark as he took off his hat. Jeanette then presented her to me.

What was it that made my heart leap up in my throat and almost choke me, and my head swim, and the film gather in my eyes, and for a moment blind me when I looked upon the face of this young girl. And oh, what a face ! A face rarely seen in all the pretty bright and handsome girls, and older women of our day. It was not the rich gold-brown hair, that lay in ripples upon the white blue-veined forehead with its dark penciled brows, nor the large dark purplish-blue eyes, with their long dark lashes ; serious eyes, deep in their depths of thought, poetry, music, art, and love. Nor the delicate chiseled nose, with just a perceptible tilt of the *rétroussé*, a mouth arched like a bow, and teeth like pearls. Nor was it the oval cheek, that rounded into the pointed chin, rivaling the tints of the sea-shell in its fairness. But the serene sweet expression, the purity and intellect of her countenance, and the gentle quiet dignity, which pervaded her whole being.

Never in all my young manhood, had I been so touched. I was acquainted with the daughters, of many of the best families of my own city. I had by accident run across Nina Palermo (poor, but superb Nina), and here was the lovely Jeanette, and fair cold aristocratic Maud, her sister. While these girls, were all exceptions, they only pleased and interested me, like some geologist, who in pursuit of his studies, comes across some uncommon and rare specimen of stone, or quartz, he is pleased and delighted with it, he carries it home to be one more in his cabinet of treasures. So it was with myself in my studies of the human species. But Clarise, fairest of her kind, beautiful maid, the dream and ideal of my youth, were you another's, were you the chosen of my friend Bertram ?

All this feeling and questioning was but momentary. In a few minutes I was myself again, as she greeted me with a gracious smile that lighted up her face, and revealed even more of the hidden lofty nature within.

“ Father has gone to Amboy,” she said, as we took

seats on the porch. "I am expecting him home every moment," and she removed her garden hat.

Then I saw the fine contour of her head, with its rippling hair. She seated herself near Bertram. He leaned over and in a low voice, made some gracious remark, at which she smiled. Then I saw that he loved her, that his love, had all the ardor, passion and romance, of first love. I do not think he saw her as I did. I think that many of the qualities of her fine nature, were lost on him. A vessel cannot receive more than it has the capacity for holding. But he loved her in his way, though I do not think he had proffered his hand and heart as yet, but that anything in the future might come to prevent it, no one ever dreamed, he least of all.

"Here is papa now," she said rising, and going to meet the professor, as he came up the walk. "Father this is Mr. Osgood, one of your old pupils at Yale. He is from the West, and is paying Bertram a visit at Anlace."

"Why bless me this is Beverly, my western lad, my socialist, a boy, whose brain had more capacity for turning out new ideas, than for mastering Virgil or Homer. I am really pleased and proud to see you. Be seated," he said, all this in his kind and gentle manner, and the courtesy, for which he was always distinguished.

He was a tall slender man, and at this time about sixty years of age. His spare brown hair was streaked with gray, his forehead high with much breadth between the eyes, that were deep set and gray in color, and sparkled out from under heavy brows, with a kindly humorous twinkle. His face was inclined to length, and his short cropped brown beard and moustache, like his hair, were streaked with silver. He was one of the most lovable of men, and a gentleman in all its sense and meaning.

He invited Bertram and myself into his library. The girls had gone into the house, and were in some part of it. We entered a wide square hall, in which stood a large bookcase, and an old-fashioned clock of dark oak, that reached from the floor half way to the ceiling, its tick, a low bell of rhythmical sounds. I stood for a moment looking at it with delight. The floor was of stained

wood, and tables and easy chairs stood about. A few rugs lay here and there, and some rare steel engravings hung upon the walls. As we passed into the library, I glanced to my right, and had a peep into the parlor, which was a large square room, hung all in blue and white, its furnishing seemingly to be more an expression of Clarise, than any other part of the house.

But the library was a love, furnished plainly but in perfect taste. One large rug covered the centre of its polished floor, and in the middle of this stood a long handsome oak table, sprinkled with the latest magazines, and new books. Bookcases, filled with books, were fitted into every angle of the wall, where there was space large enough, and at the lower end of the room, was a broad bay window, with cushioned rests. It looked into the orchard, and through the interstices of the trees, one caught a glimpse of the Bay. The walls were tinted a blue-gray, and in the small panel-like openings left by the bookcases, hung some fine etchings, some rare pictures in oil and water colors, picked up here and there by the professor on his several visits abroad. One of Turner's beautiful engravings of his Heidelberg, hung over the mantelpiece of dark oak. A sea view in oil, stood upon an easel, which the professor pointed to with great pride. It was painted by his daughter Clarise, and showed talent in that line of an exceptional order. In the soft gray and opal tones of the sea, and the low-hanging clouds, tinged with faint violet. It was a song of the sea on canvas, and she had caught a strain of its poetry.

But the professor's library was his pride, next to his only daughter and child ; it was the second edition of himself. Clarise was the light of his eye, the beauty and brightness of his home, and the joy and love of his heart. But after her came his books (ah, they were the thing). Books, books, ancient, middle-aged, and of the present time. Rare old editions, of the Latin and early Greek writers. The four gospels, written on vellum, and illuminated by the monks. Old Greek lexicons, the Vedas, in the original Sanscrit. An old twelfth century Bible, in the original Hebrew. Also all the English

classics, and standard writers, down to the present time.

Bertram and myself were busy looking over a new work on Palestine and Pompeii, with illustrations and photographs of the findings of the excavations, when a pretty-faced maid entered the library, and asked the professor, "If he and the two gentlemen, wouldn't please to step out to the orchard, that Miss Clarise, and the other young ladies waited them there."

I saw the professor's eyes twinkle, as he rose and led the way to the hall, where we found our hats. A man's hat is the indispensable companion; to take two steps from the house, even in his own yard, without his hat, is not to be thought of. The hat must go on the head, or be carried in the hand. We followed the professor through the hall, and through the dining-room, and out the side door; as we turned the last angle of the house, I got a glimpse of the orchard. In about its centre, stood a large apple tree, whose branches hung low, and spread out wide, making a complete shade, under this tree was a goodly sized table and the girls, sitting around it. As we approached there went up a merry chorus of laughter.

"A garden of the Hesperides, and the three Nymphs guarding the golden apples," said Bertram, seating himself next to Clarise.

"I doubt if the classic groves of Greece, or the gardens of Tempes, in the valley of Thessaly, with its river Penens, and called by the poets the most beautiful spot on earth, was any more beautiful, than right about this Bay and Island, or had Greece any more picturesque town, than old Amboy," said the professor, and he pointed me to a chair, next to Maud.

"The only difference, professor," I replied, "is that the Greeks had poets in those days, to name their rivers, valleys, and gardens, and sing of them. Greece was a creator of poets, philosophers, and artists. The animal man was kept under. A few pomegranates, and a handful of grapes, sufficed their simple wants, and they were no weaklings either. But this was in their early days, their early history, when men, sought the highest ideals,

and they produced their best work. Later the Romans came among them and they grew corrupt, they lost their simplicity, the animal became dominant, and they went down. They were pagan, of course, and had no God to worship but the gods of their own making."

"If we just had a poet among us, to put this scene and group of fair maidens, and brave men, into verse, and song, we might go down to posterity, in the classics of our own country," said Clarise, looking shyly at me.

"Perhaps Mr. Osgood might see something to stir his imagination to effort," said Jeanette, with a quizzical smile in my direction.

"There Beverly is the gauntlet, thrown down to you. You are the only man in this company, who can sing of it, unless the professor, can bring some classic lore to bear upon it," rejoined Bertram, with a merry laugh, as he looked at the professor, but the professor himself, seemed to be more the instigator of the laugh, than his own remark. For he stood at the head, of the table, watching Bertram, with the most peculiar expression upon his face, it was so humorous his eyes fairly danced, and his features twitched as he replied, "My poetic genius is still in embryo, I must wait until it develops." And looking up I saw a pair of lovely eyes, blue like the purple blue of the night sky, gazing at me, then she veiled them with their long dark lashes.

The professor uncorked one of the bottles of claret which stood upon the table, and poured it into three glasses, that were filled with crushed ice, and passed one to me and one to Bertram, the other was for himself. "Boys," he said, "I like a little sugar in mine," and he handed the sugar bowl to me, I did the same, and it made a delicious drink.

Clarise then passed around crispy English crackers, also oatmeal and graham crackers, which no country can surpass us in making. Also luscious Lawton blackberries. The girls filled their glasses from a pitcher filled with the morning's sweet milk. I would have enjoyed a glass of the milk, but know that it doesn't do to mix drinks ; the milk would have harmonized

with the crackers and fruit, but the milk and claret would have had a fight. While the lunch was simple it was delicious, in its delicacy food fit for the gods. As we laughed, and chatted, Maud dropped her cold formality which gave her a touch of hardness. She made herself more than usually interesting, and with her fine manner and air of high breeding, which was rather pleasing to me, than otherwise, she became quite charming.

We were here interrupted by a visitor, a big Maltese tomcat, who jumped up into Clarise's lap, and when safely curled down in his mistress's arms, he began such a purring, purling, and gurgling, as was never heard. He looked all around at the company, nodding his head, and blinking his eyes at each one of us. In a few moments Jeanette with a shower of pet names, rose up leaned over and picked him up in her arms, cuddled him up to her bosom, and he purred and rubbed his face affectionately against her neck. They were no strangers to each other, and she called him her handsome "Duke," and he looked fully conscious of the fact. His name was in no sense a misnomer, for royalty stamped all his bearing. He was the handsomest cat, I ever saw. He was very large, and his coat was a dark purplish gray, and like satin in its lustre. His two fore feet were white, and he had a white spot as large as one's hand for a breast-plate. His eyes looked like large violet pansies, tinged with gold, and the expression of his face was really beautiful, with its long slender aristocratic snout, and long gray whiskers. All which went to prove the effect of good blood, and good breeding in animals, and why not in human beings as well. He wore about his neck a narrow silver collar, fastened with a small padlock.

Duke was to the manner born, he was a Maltese of the best blood, his mother had been in the family, eleven years. She was a pet, of Mrs. Cline's, the old cat, dying three month's after her mistress, and when his lordship Duke, was but six weeks old. Clarise took the kitten under her wing, so we see the result of her training, in the royal animal before us.

" You should see Duke, when he is in one of his playful moods," said Clarise, " and wants to rid himself of his collar. If father and myself, happen to be sitting in the hall or library talking or reading, and there is no one else about. He comes in, lays flat on his back on the floor, and begins by taking his two fore feet, and works away, trying to get his collar, over his head. When his fore feet, are pretty well tired out, he takes his hind feet, and away he works, he looks so funny, like a big fur ball, with two feet and a head, and the feet, just going it. Father and I nearly kill ourselves laughing. Then he will jump up on his feet, put his forehead to the floor, and work with his two fore feet, until off the collar comes.

" Then such a racing up and down the floor, through the hall, the parlor, the dining-room, and back again to where we are sitting, when he gives a leap almost as high, as our heads, and away with him, through the house, again like mad, then back again, another leap, and off with him. When he is good and tired, he comes walking in to us as stately and demure, looking up into our faces, as solemn as an owl, as much as to say, what tickles you so, while father nearly goes into hysterics from laughing. Then he curls himself down at my feet. Father and myself have come to the conclusion, that he does it for our amusement, and to have a good frolic, himself. An hour or two later, he will without a word, or a motion of resistance, allow me to put on his collar, and he will keep it on for nearly two or three days, before another outbreak."

" But the strange part of it is," said the professor, " that he is never known to indulge in these performances, only when he finds Clarise and myself alone. No not even before Jeanette and Maud, who are almost as familiar to him as Clarise and myself. Not even before Jeanette, who pets him, and loves him as much as we do."

" I would like so much to see Duke in one of those acrobatic feats, as you say, Miss Cline, it must be so funny," I answered, leaning over and patting him on the head, which he did not seem to take to kindly. I

patted him again, calling him a beauty, but he resented it by making a leap out of Jeanette's arms, over the middle of the table, and landed on the corner where the professor was seated. Duke, sat bolt upright, his tail looking like a snake, as he switched it to and fro. We all laughed heartily.

Then there came from the other end of the orchard a man who was presumably the gardener. He was followed by two lovely dogs, of the shepherd species, the dogs, when they saw the party under the trees, came running up bounding and leaping, about the professor and Clarise. One of the dog's name was Gipp, the other Tasso. Tasso was a large dog a seal brown in color, Gipp, was a black and white. Duke looked down from his place on the corner of the table, with great composure upon the antics of the dogs, but while he seemed to view with indifference their manifestations of affection, his tail was on the defensive, it looked like a lion's and kept up a great switching,

Jeanette loved cats, and dogs, and pets of all sorts, and it was not but a few moments before she was off with Gipp and Tasso, her tall slim form, gliding in and out among the trees, playing hide and go seek.

So we all chatted and laughed, and gaily the bright hours fled. The day was still young, so were we, the birds sang for us, the leaves of the trees rustled, and their branches bent and swayed in the gentle breeze, and sung for me a sweet strange melody, such as I never before heard, but it made me glad, and I lived anew. The flowers bloom seemed lovelier and more radiant, and their perfume more fragrant and nature was all color, and harmony. The dogs, cats, rabbits, cows and calves, and little children, all gamboled and played, and everything seemed responsive to the glad and joyous morning.

On our way back to the house, Bertram left Clarise to me, and he walked ahead with the professor, Jeanette and Maud, following behind with the dogs. Duke had disappeared somewhere getting out of the way of Gipp and Tasso. Clarise informed me although the dogs would not hurt him, knowing him to be her pet, and

while Duke would stand his ground with any dog, especially a strange one, yet he would steal away to her room, or some other part of the house, whenever they were around and would not show himself, until they were gone.

As we walked and conversed I saw more of the graciousness, serenity, and intellect of this lovely girl. From her childhood up she had been her father's pupil. He had educated her in books, but her mother who was a very religious woman, took charge of her moral and spiritual training. So I found a mind stored like a ship with a cargo of precious freight, a soul, pure as crystal, without blot or blemish, capable of the highest heights, and deepest depths, and these things fashioned her face, and form, until she was good to look upon. And oh, my heart, be still, what new thing is this, which has taken possession of you! How it beat and leaped, and thumped, sending the hot blood seething to my temples. Had I come so far to meet the vision that had floated through my brain from early boyhood, the ideal of my older youth, to find her perhaps pledged to another. Still as we lingered in our pace she was not indifferent to me. She found that indefinable something in me which responded to the same in her, mind speaking to mind, and soul to soul, the spirit that needs no utterance. She loved Bertram, but she had that touch of sympathy for me which ripens into a high, and great friendship, that women of her lofty mind have been known to entertain for men, a pure and sisterly affection, and I felt though we would part, we would never again be strangers to each other.

As we all gathered upon the porch, Bertram looked at his watch. It was after eleven, time to leave and reach home before the dead heat of the day. So we took our departure. Clarise and her father were to dine at Anlace in the evening, and after dinner, we were to go for a sail on the Bay. Mr. Arlington kept no yacht, but an old sailor, a sea captain, kept a fine one, in which he took pleasure parties for an outing every morning and evening.

When we reached Anlace, we found Mrs. Leroy John-

athan, and Oswald de Coute, sitting in the shade on the west piazza. She must have taken advantage of our absence to send for him, to enjoy an hour or two of his society alone. When Jeanette saw him, there came over her face a look of astonishment, for he hardly ever came to Anlace in the morning, generally making his appearance there about half past four or five in the afternoon, and staying for dinner, and through the evening. But neither Mrs. Leroy's face, or Oswald's, expressed pleasure of each other's society.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BALL AT ANLACE.

I had been nearly six weeks at Anlace, and as I look back now they were the pleasantest, the most enjoyable, as well as the most instructive of my life. Every day there were new faces to be seen, and new people to meet at lunch, and at dinner. They were generally New Yorkers, spending the summer months at their country homes upon the Hudson, or their cottages at Long Branch, Saratoga, or Newport, or other seaside resorts. Once in a while there was a distinguished foreigner or two.

Often the whole Arlington family, including myself, Mrs. Leroy, De Coute and Clarise, would make trips to Manhattan Beach, Long Branch, Saratoga, Newport, sometimes at these places we would lunch with friends. Bertram and myself spent some delightful days together in New York City, winding up with a nice little dinner at one of the best restaurants. After dinner, we would go to hear one of the light operas upon the roof garden. Generally there was a favorite singer of Bertram's in the leading rôle.

Bertram Arlington was in no sense a Bohemian. He

could not adapt himself to the light and shade of common life. His sympathies, if he had any in that direction, had never been touched, or awakened to see in individual character, or its peculiarities, the pathos and poetry of the great human toilers. Still he was a dear fellow, an enjoyable chum, and I loved him. Big, generous and manly. He had weaknesses, one especially, and if not checked, would become his besetting sin; it was the wine cup.

But the most enjoyable time of all was the evenings spent at the professor's cottage, he still kept to the old fashioned dinner hour of noon, but what the professor and his daughter called tea, which we were more often bidden to, (I think Jeanette and Bertram—for Maud seldom accompanied us) enjoyed these teas, more than the sumptuous dinners, with fashionable guests, at their father's large mansion. They threw off all reserve and formality, and became more easy and natural, warm, kindly, and interesting. We were served by a clean wholesome looking bright faced maid, of twenty-three or four years, country born, and country bred. She was a relief to me from the stiff and stark gimlet eyed, English butlers at Anlace. When I looked at her tripping about the table, I breathed more freely, and wanted to spread out the palms of my hands and fingers, from the sense of comfort I felt.

I knew a little child, a boy of four years, who, whenever he liked any particular thing, particularly well, that he happened to be eating, would lay down his spoon, spread out the palms of his fat dimpled hands, flat upon the table, with his thumbs sticking straight out, and chew away, in perfect delight until it was time to take another mouthful.

And there was Clarise, sitting at the foot, in her blue or white dress, her gold-brown hair, bound in a Grecian knot at the back of her neck, its ripples clustering on the blue veined forehead, with its marked thoughtfulness. Surely the blood of the ancient classic Greeks mingled in the veins of this young American girl. And Clarise's father, how supremely happy he looked at these little repasts, seated at the head of the table, his eyes snapping

with sly humor, as he gave out bits of delicate speech, sparkling with wit, and as clear cut as gems. And he had such a charming way of adapting himself to young men, to their fancies, foibles, and conceits. Great scholar, as he was, he was as free as a child from pedantry. I have observed that all truly great and noble men are childlike. This man of learning was as simple as a little child in his ways. While at college, we all loved him, but these evenings spent in his home, showed me another side to his character; gave me a glimpse into the inner self of the man. It was another lesson in human studies, that here and there, nature does her work complete.

After supper, we generally took ourselves to the front porch for a while. Here we would be joined by Duke, and the dogs Gipp and Tasso. During the evening, our amusements became varied; sometimes we would take a sail on the Bay, then again when the wind blew too cool, and kept us in the house, we would play a game of whist in the library. Whist was the professor's game at cards. In these visits, I was often thrown for half an hour at a time alone with Clarise. And every time we met, revealed to me some new charm of hers, some delicate thoughtfulness for others. Sometimes it would be for Jeanette, then for Bertram, or myself, but more often for her father. But the storehouse, the treasure-trove, the most beautiful of all was her mind.

And I loved her more and more as the days went by, but I guarded well my secret. She never guessed, nor did I betray to Bertram or Jeanette, by look, word, or act, any symptom of this strange sweet thing that had taken up its abode in my heart, that changed me from a dreaming irresponsible boy, to a man. My love for Clarise was not with me as most young men's first love, a mad and burning passion. Oh, no, no, it came unasked, unheeded, born in the fullness of its purity, depth and sweetness. It had come to stay.

My six weeks at Anlace had flown as if on wings, and on this night, was to be the great ball, given as a send-off to Jeanette's wedding, and I was to leave for home in a few days. Men had come from New York, to arrange the house, and stretch tarpaulin over the carpets and

floors to protect them. Also to decorate the grounds, and erect the dancing tent. It did not take long to do this, for everything belonging to the tent, came with it already made from a house in New York, which furnished these things. And when the floor was laid, and the florists and decorators finished their work, it looked as if the hand of some magician had brought forth out of the air, a ball-room of fairy splendor.

After dinner, which was hurried through with, I went to my room to dress. It was then about a quarter to eight, I had an hour and a half in which to make my toilet, half after nine or ten, would be time enough to show myself in the drawing-room. I felt that I was not so well prepared in the way of dress suits, for an affair of this kind, a ball, where the spick and span, and choice of all New York swelldom was to gather. I had provided myself with a good wardrobe before leaving home, and had but one black broadcloth suit, one my tailor said, was not to be beat for elegance, fit, and style, in London or Paris, or even in New York (and charged me accordingly). But I had no idea I would have any use for it, as I was not a society man.

About ten o'clock I left my room and went downstairs. I had much trouble in making my way, they were so crowded with people coming up and going down. But what a scene of dazzling brilliance met my eyes, as I came to the lower landing, and when I reached the grand salon, where Mrs. Arlington, with Maud, Jeanette and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan stood, in the midst of light strains of music, the color and perfume of flowers; certainly one of Julius Cæsar's court balls, could not have rivaled it in splendor. Mrs. Arlington wore a gown of steel-blue satin, and pale gold, covered with black lace, worth a king's ransom. White and red roses looped up the lace here and there, and a large bunch of the same roses was worn to the right, low, on the corsage. Long white gloves were drawn up over her bare arms, almost meeting the short puffed sleeve. In her hand, she carried a pearl and point-lace fan, and encircling her round alabaster throat, was a necklace of diamonds, as large as marrowfat peas. They gleamed and scintillated, catching all the colors of the room, in

their pure white light, and with every heave and sigh of her bosom, they threw it out again in thousands of reflected tints and hues. She looked very handsome, and younger by ten years. Not a gray hair was to be seen, indeed there was no difference to-night, between its color and her daughter Maud's beautiful chestnut brown.

At her right stood Jeanette, head and shoulders taller, and oh, what a picture for my eyes, my heart leaped to my throat at sight of her, and my pen grows feeble now in trying to portray to the reader the unusual beauty of this queenly girl. The strange effect the beauty of this girl had upon me, was beyond my power to analyze. When my eyes would chance to rest upon her, a thrill of pleasure and delight would pass through my mind, and vibrate through every fibre of my body, my admiration for her being more of the intellect, than the senses.

Her robe was of some rich silken stuff, the color a pale sea green of such tints as Harrison catches in his sea-waves, when the sun shows half its face, in long rifts of silvery clouds. Over this was worn white chiffon, or silken gauze. I cannot tell how it was draped, some artist hand must have done that, but it began at the shoulders of the low bodice, in puffs and ruffles, until it met the waistline, then swathed the hips, and was caught here and there in folds in front; then wound about the back, and fell away again, in full drapery, over the long sweeping train of the silk, to the hem. It was just the gown for her tall, slim, agile body, with its willowy, wildering grace. Her abundant and lustrous black hair, was coiled high on top of her head, and fastened by a golden comb, set with jewels, and lay in short curls on her low broad forehead, with its dark straight brows. Her strangely beautiful violet-gray eyes, with their long black lashes, seemed to laugh out at me, as I presented myself before her mother, herself, and the others. So did her mouth smile, like her eyes, and her small pearly teeth, made a contrast to her yellow skin. In her ears, she wore rings, of pearls and diamonds, and about her slender throat was wound string after string of great pearls, with a diamond, as big as a hazelnut clasping each string. Nestling low upon her bosom, was a mass of

red roses, and her fan was carved ivory and white satin, studded with pearls.

Beside her, stood her sister Maud, looking like a blush rose, in a robe of pale pink silk and white gauze. Mrs. Leroy Johnathan stood to Mrs. Arlington's left. While Jeanette's attire in every tint and tone, every fold and loop, was the expression of herself, of intellect, art and poetry, Mrs. Leroy's, was the very opposite in feeling. She stood a dazzling figure, the very embodiment of the sensuous; art, she had, but it was subject to the senses. Her gown was white, a rich cream brocaded satin, made very low, and tight fitting. Nowhere about me was to be seen a greater display of neck, shoulders, and bosom. They were not fleshy but white as alabaster, and exquisitely moulded, their lines and curves suggesting those of the snake.

Covering the bodice of her dress, was rare and costly lace, which fell down over the skirt and long train, like the crusted foam of sea waves. A piece of the lace, made a sleeve, which was but a strap, over the shoulders, this was caught in the centre with stones as pure as the blue water of Lake Ontario, when a cloudless June sky hangs low over its surface, and its ripples send out a thousand hued lights. Her hair wore a brighter hue of Titian gold to-night, and was drawn up and tied in a Grecian knot, at the nape of her neck, with fluffy curls on her forehead. Her brows were tinted dark, so were her eyelashes, giving her eyes an amorous expression. Her cheeks had the faintest tinge of rose, and her lips a natural touch of red. The *tout-ensemble* of her whole make-up, was a study to draw the masculine eye, and to appeal to the sensual in man.

She was one of those women whom Tolstoi mentions in his "Kreutzer Sonata," that man, on beholding her wants to demand police intervention, to remove the dangerous thing. When I bowed before her, her eyes scanned me coldly from the top of my head to the toe of my patent leather shoe. But I did not flinch, I knew while my clothes were not so ultra-fashionable as some men present, they were elegant, and I was clad befitting a gentleman, and the occasion. Mr. Leroy

Johnathan was in full evening dress. He stood behind his wife, speaking to Mr. Arlington, who looked big, handsome, and plethoric, one of the world's full men.

Then I looked about me for Bertram, for the guests were crowding in, and beginning to throng the stairs, halls, library and grand salon. I found him in the reception hall, standing near the door that led into the dining-room, which was not far from the foot of the winding stairway. He was clad in all the regalia of full evening dress and looked handsomer than I ever saw him. He rose tall and straight as a Corinthian column, and towered over the heads of nearly all the men present.

"Beverly," he said, after we had stood a few moments chatting, "have you been to the dancing tent?"

"No, I have just come from paying my devoirs to your mother and sisters, and the other ladies." I had but finished my sentence, when I saw Professor Cline and his daughter, turn up the lower landing of the stairway. Bertram stepped over to meet them, for it was Clarise and her father he was waiting for. Oh, fair Clarise, to give the reader any idea of your loveliness on this night, is beyond my feeble powers. All I can write of is that your dress was white, and of some silken shimmering stuff, the back of the bodice made high in the neck, and fold after fold lapped over the bosom, in surplice fashion. A bunch of hothouse violets nestled to one side of the corsage, contrasting with the milky whiteness of her slender throat. Long silken cream gloves, were drawn up over the elbows, to meet the short sleeves. Her hair was twisted in a Grecian knot high on top of her head, while a fillet of gold clasped the curls on her blue-veined brow. She stood out from that rich attired and gay throng, conspicuous in her simplicity of dress, her beauty, and that indefinable charm which few possess. Oh, fair Clarise, sweetest, purest, and dearest of girls, it is women like you, that awaken all that is best and highest and manly in us, and stir them to achievement, and make us blush that we ever harbored one impure thought of your sex.

She greeted me cordially, and gave Bertram her hand, he gallantly bent over it, held it to his lips, and imprinted

a kiss upon it. She then took her father's arm, Bertram walked by her side, and I by the professor's, through the hall, and as far as the door of the grand salon, where they went in to pay their respects to Mrs. Arlington, and where Clarise lingered to chat with Maud and Jeanette.

I made my way back through the crowd to the hall, that ran east and west across the house. The east door led into the ballroom tent. As I stood a second or two on the steps, I was amazed as well as charmed, with the beauty, brilliance, and splendor of the scene. The tent was very large, and the floor was made of polished oak boards, and perfect in their joining and smoothness. The walls were hung with a silken brocaded bunting of pale canary. Flowers, plants, and palms, and rare exotics, stood about in profusion, with here and there pieces of statuary in their midst. Musicians in full evening dress played upon harps, violins, and bass viols.

It made one think of a grand ball in a king's palace, and of Byron's lines in his "Waterloo": "There was a sound of revelry by night, and fair women, and brave men, looked love into eyes which spake again, and all went merry as a marriage bell." I turned away from the door, passed through the hall and the crowd, and out to the front piazza. The night was lovely, one of those cool delicious northern September nights, when the heavens are radiant with starlight, when nearly all the planets are in sight, and seemed to have dispatched to one another to meet at certain points of the firmament, and are all trying to outshine one another in brightness and glory. The park looked like an enchanted forest, where fairies, in the shape of men and women, in shining robes of different colors and hues, glided in and out through the trees, which soothed and sighed above their heads. The air was laden with the hum and murmur of voices, and the strains of music. And the sweet winds caught them up, mingled them together, changed them to harmonies of dulcet notes, sounds, and melodies, and sang them in the ears of lovers.

I went back again to the house, intending to go with my friends, to the ballroom. Mrs. Arlington and her daughters, had left their places in the grand salon. When

I reached the long hall, Bertram, Clarise, Maud, Jeanette, Oswald de Coute and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan were just leaving the reception hall, on the way to the dancing tent, I followed after them out the door, and down the steps. The floor-manager was just forming sets for a quadrille. I rarely ever danced; I had gone for a winter or two, to Professor Soupan's Dancing Academy, which gave me some idea of going through the figures. I took Maud out for the first dance, Bertram, Clarise; Oswald de Coute, Jeanette, and Mrs. Leroy had her husband for a partner, which made up the set. Oswald de Coute was a perfect dancer, he was grace itself, and he looked very handsome on this evening; had he been heir to a dukedom, his manner, bearing and aristocratic appearance could not have been improved. Jeanette seemed to float through the figures, Oswald de Coute was no match for her in grace. Maud, also danced well. Mrs. Leroy's dancing was like everything else she did, studied. Bertram was a good dancer. Mr. Leroy, like myself, floundered through some way, without blundering.

After the quadrille was finished, there were other young men who claimed the society of the ladies, for other dances, and I took myself to a retired nook, where I had a splendid view of the crowd, which represented the wealth, fashion, and blue blood of New York City. The young girls were lovely, all young girls are, even when plain in face, but when dressed for a ball, surrounded by flowers, music, and the dazzling lights, they are something enchanting. As for the dressing of the women, nowhere in the whole world, not even in Paris, could there be found more beautiful creations. Not one dowdy looking woman was to be seen in the whole assembly. But what struck me so forcibly was the handsome mature women, from the fresh rounded beauty of the woman of thirty (for she is never so handsome as at that age), up to the woman forty-five, and fifty. It was not so much beauty of face, it was only here and there. I saw a really beautiful face, in refinement of feature and expression, or an intellectual cast of countenance. But they mostly all had good physiques, and had much to build upon.

Like the Greeks, it looked as if they made their bodies their special care. While their aim was in a sense beauty, yet unlike the Greeks, who were pagan, their aim was to master the passions, to live simply, and what the Christian seeks in the spiritual, they knowing no God, but those made by hands, sought the highest in the intellect, in music, and art. But here was wealth, ease, luxury, and the pleasures of life, the sensual, refined to the sensuous, until it becomes more dangerous, and more death-dealing to the soul and the spiritual, which is life. Sense stamped their faces, their bodies and every movement. Their rich gowns of brocades and satin, rare and costly laces, and jewels which kings and queens only revel in, these women wore as lavishly and profusely, upon their necks and arms, as if they were glass beads strung upon strings.

I was enjoying these reflections when Bertram came up behind me and tapped me on the shoulder. "What an unsocial fellow you are, Beverly, better go up to the Catskills, and build yourself a hut, and turn hermit at once. I have been hunting for you the last half hour. I want to introduce you to some of the men and ladies of our set. There are some lovely girls, and charming married women, also a few widows who make the young bachelors, as well as the older ones, feel when in their society, that they want to carry them off then and there, and marry them. Come along and I will present you, and you must take some of the girls out to dance."

"All right, old fellow, but you mistake me when you say I am unsocial. There is nothing I enjoy more than society, but I like to enjoy it in my own way. Like the religionist, I am in the world, but not of it."

"Judging from the expression of you face, when I came upon you, you were of the world, but not in it," returned Bertram, with a hearty laugh.

"Say, old fellow, I don't care about being presented in person, to those people you speak of, but if you can spare me an hour or so from your ladies, and sit here beside me in this corner (this is a splendid place to see, and not be seen), we will have a full view of the dancers, and everybody coming in and going out. You will tell

me who they are, and something of their personal history. I want to see if I am right, in my observations and impressions.

“By George, Beverly, what a conundrum you are now I am nothing of a gossip, I hate a man-gossip, but of course a fellow with a mother and two sisters in society, and having large connections, hears lots of things. And I myself, am acquainted with so many young men, and older ones too, and let me say here, the young men don’t begin to keep pace with the older men. They make more noise, and go on more frolics, but their morals are better. Besides they have no wife to deceive, or family of children to hurt. Ah, here come the De Arms, by George, just the ones. You see that couple, just entered?”

“Yes,” I answered, as my eyes rested on a vision in rich brocade a pale canary color, covered with lace, which seemed woven from the silken web of the spider’s loom. She was a tall, magnificent looking blonde, her arms, neck and shoulders were superb, and towered in marble whiteness away above the bodice of her dress, and shone resplendent with jewels. She was very handsome; her hair was like burnished gold, her eyes, large, blue and amorous in expression. Her face and form had the voluptuous swelling curves which attract men of the world. She leaned upon the arm of a man of over forty years of age, he was what is called good-looking, rather than handsome.

“They have been married but six months,” resumed Bertram, fixing himself in a more comfortable position.

“Oh, they are man and wife, was she a widow, when married?” I asked, wondering how it happened if she were not a widow, that a woman of her kind of beauty, and position in the world, came to be thirty and over before being married.

“Yes,” replied Bertram, “the kind the courts make. The whole affair came out in the newspapers, they get hold of everything nowadays, and the more prominent the parties, the more the scandal is aired, all over the land. The other wife, and her two children, have gone

home to the paternal roof. If she were the kind of woman that would marry again, it would not be so hard, for she has the law on her side. She got the divorce, she is a strict Roman Catholic and does not believe in marrying again."

"I thought that adultery was the only ground a divorce was granted unto either husband or wife, in the State of New York," I said.

"The only ground."

"Had she a husband?"

"Oh, yes, he was the one that first kicked up the rumpus, it was pot calling kettle black. She was bad enough, but not half as bad as he, for when he married her, she was a pure girl, and he had a domicile up town, which he still retained, after he took to wife the beautiful Fanny Foster, the daughter of old John Foster, rich as a Jew."

"And how came she here to-night, after this escapade, this destroying of the peace of homes, this stealing of husband, and the husband stealing of the wife. This slaughtering of the sixth and seventh commandments. I should think it would have lost both of them their place in society."

"I think myself, it is bad business; these things make men and women, even those whose morals won't bear inspection, feel mean. But the law of the land steps in and rights things; it's the thick blanket we resort to, to cover our moral sores."

"But my dear Bertram, here is a man, with a wife and children. The law of the land thrusts his wife and children into the street, you might say would have, if she did not have a home to go to, and relieves her husband of any responsibility of the care and support of his children, and also of the crime committed against his wife, and the community he lives in. You say the law of the State of New York gave the divorce to her, yet it permits him to marry again. You see what a farce the law of the land is in regard to marriage, and things less sacred, how it trifles with the family, which is the very foundation and rock of the State. And what a condition of morals must your society have, that condones the sin of this man and woman."

"By George, Beverly, I have never looked at it from your standpoint before, and I don't think mother did either, although she is pretty strict, and what we call in these loose times, a little Puritanical. But she is not to blame so much for the De Arms being here. Mrs. Foster, Fanny's mother, is an old friend and schoolmate of mother's. She felt terribly over the whole business, and the part her daughter played in it, and her expulsion from society, for it is two years since the affair was first aired in the papers. She came to mother a few weeks ago, and got down on her knees, and begged her with tears in her eyes, for an invitation to the ball to-night for Fanny. Saying if she, mother, would recognize her Fanny, and she would be seen here to-night, she thought it would redeem her daughter in the eyes of the world, and restore her to her former place in society. They are very rich, and can't bear to be excluded, and of course wealth counts. Mother did send her an invitation, but depended on Fanny's good sense not to come. But she is here, and judging from her looks and the way she carries herself, is determined to brave it out.

"He does not put on such a bold front. Men will do mean things, but they are more of moral cowards than women. While there are others here who are just as bad in other ways as the De Arms, you watch and you will see that the guests are not flocking about them, and Fanny and her new husband will find themselves treated to the cold shoulder. This feeling comes partially from the great sympathy for his deserted wife. Mother says she is a lovely woman, beautiful in person and character, and belongs to an old and aristocratic family. I believe with you, Beverly, the whole business is not only distressing, but disgusting. Come, we had better go and find the girls, then go and have some supper, I am decidedly hungry."

Just then the music ceased, and as we made our way out through the throng, we came upon Maud and a young Mr. Farish, her partner in the dance just finished. "Come, Maud, we are going in to supper, as soon as we find the others," said Bertram. A little further on we

bumped up against Jeanette and Oswald de Coute. "Have you seen Clarise?" Bertram inquired.

"Yes," she answered, "she is over there to your left. Clarence Hilton, the artist, has not left her a moment, but has danced three dances in succession with her. You had better not go meandering off with Mr. Osgood, or some of these young men will be carrying her away."

"I am going to take her captive now, if a dozen Clarence Hiltons stand by with drawn swords," said Bertram, sauntering off, while we remained where we were, until he returned. And I in my secret soul, envied Clarence Hilton, who ever he was. He was not bound by friendship to the man who she loved, therefore could steal an hour or two of her society, without any qualms of conscience.

As I stood conversing with Maud, my eyes chanced to rest upon Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, who was standing to my right, with three or four young men dallying about her. She was in her glory, the acme of her ambition. Her face was all animation, her eyes shone, and her white teeth gleamed, as she laughed and chatted, and with every waft of her fan, exhaled perfume, and with every undulating move of her body, the jewels flashed and scintillated upon her ivory neck, shoulders and bosom. Mr. Leroy Johnathan was not in sight, I suppose off with Mr. Arlington, and some of the elderly men, believing his honor and her own, perfectly safe in her keeping. In a few moments Bertram came back with Clarise leaning on his arm, looking as pleased and happy as a little child.

"I wondered where you all went to, even father disappeared and I was left entirely to the gentlemen. I felt perfectly helpless, I cannot manage to make myself agreeable to more than one at a time. I am not gifted in small talk."

"You will have to cultivate it, Miss Clarise," I said, "it is a pleasing gift, and the best possible passport in the social world."

"I fear I am not inclined to take the trouble; you don't know how relieved I felt when I saw Bertram coming."

Bertram then led the way in to supper. The supper-room, or the refreshment tent, as some called it, opened directly off the ball-room, and was almost as large, and as handsomely decorated. The long tables groaned under the weight of cut glass, china and silver, and were radiant with the color and perfume of flowers and fruit. Men in swallow-tail coats, white vests, white gloves and patent leather shoes, waited upon us. And such a bill of fare. There was nothing in the markets of New York, in the way of meats, fish, poultry, and what the best cooks to be had, could invent, of jellies, creams, ices, cakes and pastry; all to be had for the asking, also coffee, tea, and all kinds of wines. It made me think of Belshazar's feast, when the guests saw the handwriting on the wall.

We were a merry group, and when about half through we were joined by Professor Cline and Mrs. Arlington and her husband, Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, with her husband, and one or two of her coterie of gentlemen I saw dangling about her in the ball-room. I enjoyed this hour and a half at table, more than all the evening. Do not think, dear reader, that the source of my enjoyment came from having so many good things at my command. I am no epicure, I am young, healthy and strong. I like a good square meal, and I enjoy it too, as well as any man, but I eat to live, I do not live to eat. Oh, no, it was not the tempting viands, they played their part, but the charming society, the lovely girls, and handsome women, and the men, grouped about me, the expression of kindness and affection upon their faces. The delightful chit-chat, the epigrams, flashes of wit, which came so unexpectedly, and was so exceedingly pleasant and exhilarating. When finished, we went back to the ball-room, and I claimed Jeanette for a partner in the dance then forming. The next dance was with a bright petite blonde, after that, to my great relief, some other young man claimed her for the following.

Feeling a little tired, I made my way through the throng to the large door that led into the park. There were couples sitting here and there, under the trees. I walked about for some time, going as far down as the gate, which opened to the road, then I retraced my steps,

came back to the house, and crossed to the west side. Here stood the summer house, and back of it a long grape arbor; the summer house was shaded by two great elm trees, under these trees were seats the same as all the trees near the house. I threw myself into one of these seats, but before doing so I looked into the summer house, there was no one there, nor did I see any one on this side of the grounds, as the guests hovered about the ball-room. I had not been long there and was sitting with my back leaning against the trunk of the tree, that stood at one angle of the summer house, with my legs stretched upon the bench, when I saw a couple of lovers, as I supposed them to be, coming slowly along through the trees. I watched them as they came nearer, once they stopped and seemed to be in earnest conversation, then started on again. As they drew closer, they seemed to be either making for the summer house, or the trees, where I lay, as the spot was quite secluded and no one except some member of the family, would be apt to know of it.

Feeling somewhat irritated at the idea of being molested in my retreat, I gathered myself up and moved farther behind the summer house, putting the trunk of the tree between myself and the couple. But as I was moving, the couple had come quite near, and I heard their voices, and to my unspeakable surprise and horror, it was Oswald de Coute and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan. "Come," he said, "we will go into the summer house, we can finish our talk there, and we shall not be so apt to be overheard." They entered the house, and seated themselves in a corner at the back, the very spot my head leaned against on the outside, and this is what I heard.

"Now Minnie, we must settle things to-night," began Oswald, in a cool patronizing drawl, "you will have to be careful, very circumspect. This is not the Swiss Mountains, Carlsbad, or Genoa. We must not be seen together so much, it will excite suspicion, you can't expect any attention from me, but the polite courtesy due from a gentleman to a married lady, until after my marriage with Jeanette."

"Then your mind is fully made up to marry her this coming Fall," she said, in a tearful voice, in which there was a mingling of intense bitterness.

"Minnie, what do you mean, what do you want? I can't marry you, you have a good husband, he adores you, and your every wish is his law. I know we have both played the fool, you don't want a scandal now, it would be horrible, it would ruin us both, Minnie."

"I was married when we first met at Genoa, I was but a bride of a few months, you were not so calculating then; it all began in a flirtation, and you know the rest. I never loved my husband, he was my mother's choice, I was very ambitious, I liked his money, I had social position, but no money to sustain it. Perhaps I would have learned to love him, if you had not come upon the scene. I am not a good woman, do not claim to be; I am fond of admiration and the pleasures of life; you have sworn to me time and again, that you loved me as I do you. I have as much dread of a scandal as you, but I cannot bear to have another woman, and that woman, your wife, come between me and the man I love."

"You are unreasonable, Minnie, did you think I would never marry, every man wants to marry, sooner or later. I supposed you were sensible enough to expect it." There was no drawl or affectation in his voice, as he spoke these words, but a cold metallic irritability in its ring. "It's deucedly hard," he continued, "for a man to have to speak this way to a woman he likes, but I have some honor left, Minnie, and I expect you to be sensible, and look at the thing right. And to be plain with you, we must stop this intriguing, and put an end to this damnable liaison."

I could feel her put her hands up to her ears, to shut out the sound of what she considered his brutal words, then she covered her face with them. "You can marry," she replied, after a long pause, then I heard her rise and step back a pace or two, from where he was sitting, she took her hands from her face, and in a sort of smothered wail she added, "but you do not love Jeanette Arlington, you love me."

I waited to hear no more, I slid from the bench to

the ground, and crawled on my hands and knees into the grape arbor, until far enough to rise to my feet without being heard, and walked to the end, and came out at the back of the house. I walked around to the east side, which brought me to the park. Stunned and astounded at what I had heard, I kept crying in my mind: "Oh, perfidy, sensuality, thy name is man. Oh, woman, adulterous woman, the Lord Christ was great indeed, merciful beyond human conception, when he had pity on such as you. When he said to the Jews, who were stoning the adulterous woman, whom Moses in the law, commanded to be stoned, "He that be without sin, first cast a stone at her." Sweet, tender Lord Christ, surely none but a God could have uttered such compassionate words.

I hurried around by the dancing-tent, and past the porte-cochère, where the carriages were rapidly driving up and away again as fast as they filled. I entered the ball-room, it was considerably thinned. I stood looking about me for some of my friends, when Clarence Hilton, the artist, came up and said he believed the Misses Arlington, with Miss Cline, had gone to the house. "Come," I said, "let us go to the supper-room, I would like a cup of coffee before retiring. We went to the supper-room, Hilton ordered champagne, I observed that most of the young men, and older men drank, with the exception of Professor Cline, and myself, and at that hour there was scarcely a sober man to be seen. I drank my coffee, and came back again to the ball-room, bid Hilton good-night, and went up the steps and into the hall. It was crowded with people going out and coming in, all the ladies with their wraps on waiting for their carriages to be called.

I made my way through them without meeting any one of the Arlington family, and went up the stairs to my room, lighted my gas, took out my watch, looked at it, it was just half-past three. It would soon be daybreak.

CHAPTER X.

THE BREAK OF DAY.

I pulled off my gloves, coat, and vest; also my tie, unfastened my collar, slipped on a light dressing gown, and slippers, lighted a cigar, turned the gas down, and threw myself into an armchair that stood by the east window. I was still stupefied with astonishment and the horror of what I heard from my retreat under the trees, by the summer house. Heard from the lips of Oswald de Coute, and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan,. I never dreamed that a woman holding her position in the social world, could stoop to such a loss of honor. It showed that ease, luxury, wealth, place, were in themselves no preventative to the gratification of forbidden desires, but rather a stimulus. She did not even possess the sense of honor, which her training, education, and the advantage of her position gave her, and that might and should act as an incentive to the higher honor of a wife. But she had worn purple and fine linen, all the days, of her life, drank of the delicate wines, and eat of the rich food, so long that they had deadened the moral sense, the restraining power, while losing their own flavor to the palate. The Greeks philosophy, that "the rarity of the thing, is its enjoyment," is true. The men and women of Oswald de Coute and Mrs. Leroy's world, are in constant pursuit of pleasures, and they are no sooner born than they are gratified, and no sooner gratified, than they die upon the vitiated appetite.

I thought of the helpless girl, the widow, who have seen better days, but now hunger and cold, and bald poverty, staring her and her little children in the face, such a woman might be tempted to do wrong and be pitied. I thought of Nina Palermo, scarcely out of her teens, with her wondrous beauty of face and form, full of the romance, dreams, ideals, and ambitions of youth; Nina, with the gentle and proud blood of her father,

mingling with the moral and honest integrity of her mother, running in her veins. Brought up by a poor and obscure woman, yet such as is good to meet now and then. Their wholesomeness, honesty, moral healthfulness, and womanliness, which falls like the balm of Gilead upon those tired of a shamming world.

Nina, reared in a New York tenement house, one of the great toiling mass of humanity, reared to earn her bread by the sweat of her brow. To face the world, to join that great army of women, of whom hundreds and thousands, every year, fall by the wayside. Driven, driven, persecuted because she fled from her foe, who would have slain that which should be dearer to every woman than life. Failing to make her his prey he branded her with a lie, and drove her from her place, the right to earn an honest living, side by side with her sisters. Poor Nina, when the door of that great dark house, received you inside, and its portals closed upon you, it did not shut you out from these eyes, of mine, I shall see you again, how or where or under what circumstances I know not.

I turned my head, and looked out of the window, the dawn was just breaking in the east, above long rifts of silvery gray clouds, fringed with pale rose hues, and in an interstice of these shone Venus in all her brilliant splendor, and to the left of her, was the crescent moon, lying like a bow of gold, on the feathery edge of a cloud. Off in the distance, I beheld the peaks of the Catskills, rising up dark against the white line of the horizon, then sweeping away like great billows rising and falling, until lost in the thick haze which lay like a purple lake to my right.

Then the clouds parted, showing streaks of a luminous greenish blue, changing the rose hue of their edges to red. And Venus, sailed upon their top ridge, looking like a great jewel dropped from the moon, as its light faded into the larger and clearer light of day. Then the sun peeped out above the hills, and threw up its arms, and flung long arrows of gold over mountains, and valleys, villages and hamlets, over Inlet and Bay, over sea,

earth, and sky. What a silent beautiful spectacle it was to witness while the world slept.

I rose and threw myself into bed, and slept until awakened by a slight noise in the hall, made by some housemaid, dropping a broom. I jumped up looked at my watch, its hands touched a quarter to eight, I undressed, bathed, and put on other clothing, then went down to breakfast. I found the hall full of guests, who had remained over night. After breakfast Professor Cline and his daughter, took their departure for home. I bid him and Clarise good-by, as I myself was going to leave that same evening for the West.

"You will come East next summer, Beverly," he said, as he held my hand, in his tight warm grasp, "then I hope to have you spend a few weeks with myself and Clarise. We shall try to make you as comfortable as possible." Ah, Clarise, as I took the hand, you held out to me I dare not turn my eyes, and look into yours, I had not the courage. What poor weak stumbling, blundering, awkward things men are, when trying to conceal their love from the object loved. A woman can do it, but a man makes poor work of it. I raised her hand to my lips, and impressed a kiss upon it, which was permissible. About three o'clock in the afternoon I took my leave of the Arlingtons, Mrs. Arlington gave me a pressing invitation to come again. "The door of this domicile is always open to you, young man," said Mr. Arlington, with a hearty shake of the hand. I felt all along that Jeanette reciprocated the friendship I bore her, whether she felt any of the great admiration for myself that she awakened in me I know not. While I think she must have had some, I hardly think it could reach the same degree I cherished for her. Maud had also shown a marked preference for my society, but I thought it purely platonic, and kindly feeling.

Bertram accompanied me to New York, where we dined, and had a few hours of delightful comradeship. Then to the New York Central Depot, where I bought my ticket, and a through sleeper for home. And a little after nine o'clock I was on my way as fast as steam could carry me to the West.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUMMER OF 1896.

A year after I left New York, in '92, my uncle died. The great business depression that fell upon the country, with the coming in of Cleveland's second administration, affected my uncle, more than he could realize for some time. Through the advice of a silent partner, he had invested heavily in certain stocks, outside of his mercantile business, had also made large loans, to private parties. Things kept going lower, and lower, until one morning, he woke up to find himself bankrupt. After this he fell very ill, and in a few weeks, passed away.

I will not speak here of our parting, and the terrible blow, he felt it to be at finding a large fortune, the accumulating of which he had given nearly his whole life, swept away one might say, with a whiff of wind. Nor will I dwell on the almost paralyzing grief I felt for the loss of one who had been more than a father to me, indeed I knew no father, but him, and I loved him greatly. After a year my lawyer succeeded in getting the tangles out of a very complicated estate. All he could save at that time was the big house and all its furniture and appointments, which was our home since my first remembrance. My uncle had kept this free from debt, and mortgages, and as he left a will, bequeathing all to me, the house, came into my possession. A little later a certain prominent club, wishing to move farther up town, thought my home was just the place, suited to them in every way, and the result was a lease for a number of years.

In the L of the third floor, were two small connecting rooms, a sitting-room, and a bedroom, these I had

permission from the president of the club to reserve for myself, as they were of no possible use to the members, and suited me to a T. Of course the president, who knew my uncle well, favored me. My sitting-room, or my den, as I termed it, had two large windows, one facing the north, and one the west, my bedroom window looked east. And what glorious views I had of the heavens at daybreak, at sunset, and at night, and midnight, when the planets, with all their brilliant train, sailed over the deep purple dome.

I moved all my traps up there, pictures, books, bric-a-brac, and wardrobe, Aunt Lucy, and myself, arranging the whole thing. My uncle's death, threw the dear old soul out of a home, but as she said, "I knows my foster chile won let me want now I'm ole, an homeless." She rented a room from some friends of hers, I paid her rent securing her the shelter, she also did my washing and mending, took care of my rooms, and my welfare in general, as she had done from my boyhood up, and I paid her well.

I must say, that I deeply deplored the loss of my fortune, I had been reared from childhood, with this expectation, and as I grew to manhood, I had speculated, and dreamed much about the good use I would put it to, if I lived, and it ever came into my possession. I hope the reader will not think me selfish, or that my grief could be assuaged for my uncle by his money coming into my hands. Oh no, no only son could have mourned a dear generous noble father, more than I did for him. It took me months, and months, to rally from the stupor of my grief, and wake up to my loss and position. I could play at things no longer, I must pick myself up, and put my shoulder to the wheel. I was alone in the world, I was a man, I must fight my way, and keep a man, and be manly. I had a small income it was true, and a den, which was something to start on, but I had to work. I must face the music, and what training and education I had, I must find a way to apply it. After doing desultory work for several months, on different newspapers, I was offered a position, as a reporter on a prominent morning paper. I had come now

to look upon journalism, and writing, as my profession, I liked it better and found myself more adapted to it than any other walk in life.

I had worked upon this morning journal, nearly two years, and had been upon the editorial staff, for about a year, which brought me to the spring of eighteen hundred and ninety-six, when the presidential campaign broke full upon the country. I knew then which way the wind was blowing, I grasped the whole situation, I knew it would be a hard and bitter fight in the West, and on the side of the people. While the East, feeling perfectly secure, as to its candidate, would have to exert itself, to stay the opposition. There is no doubt but that there are a few men, in the East, New York City their headquarters, who make and unmake presidents. The people have not awakened to this fact, yet, but when they do, my what an awakening there will be.

The first speech in the Senate, of Senator Tillman, of South Carolina, was the forerunner of what was to follow. Many who had been having their eyes turned to the West, looking for a man of the people, thought they saw in him the man, but never dreamed of looking to the poor but aristocratic South, for their deliverer. It was also the coming of some of the grandest and most noble utterances, ever spoken by man, in a presidential campaign. I knew McKinley would be the Republican candidate, and the sixteenth of June confirmed it. But in July at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, a man from the West made his appearance, and flashed like a meteor of wondrous light, over a great nation. A man noble in bearing, handsome, a face beautiful in countenance, stamped with intellectuality, and the fire of poetic genius, burning in his eyes. Just enough western ruggedness for strength, character, and manliness.

As the theme of this book is not politics, only as it will be touched upon here and there, and as it isn't my province to dwell long on a subject, which would excite prejudices, suffice it to say here, that after the platform, adopted at the Chicago Democratic Convention, with Bryan for president, and Sewell for vice-president, I made up my mind to throw up my place on the Morning

Bugle, as its politics, were different from mine, and I could not write one way and think another, as its editor-in-chief did. He dispatched me, "If I wanted to succeed as a journalist, I mustn't allow myself to be troubled by any qualms of conscience, in the political arena, to go in to win. Go ahead," he wrote, "and use that pen of yours, in favor of McKinley, for we are going to have one of the grandest Republican victories, that ever this country recorded." I answered back, "I was sure of that (and so I was) but I was going to take a holiday, I was going East to New York City, to spend the summer months."

"Just the place my boy," he wrote back on a piece of brown paper, "and anything you wish to write up in the social line, or the political, the columns of the *Bugle* are at your service."

I wish to state here that my lawyer, had recovered for me several thousand dollars, from a rich firm, that was my uncle's debtor, to a large amount.

After sending over the wires, all my copy from Chicago, where I had been sent to report, I left the evening after the breaking up of the Democratic Convention, and the morning after the second I arrived in New York City, after an absence of four years. I went to the Brunswick, and registered, intending to remain incognito to all my friends for a while at least.

I will now steal a few minutes to go back. Jeanette Arlington, and Oswald de Coute were married in the October, after I left Anlace, and spent the winter abroad. They were now residing at Malmarda Castle. Maud had also married young Mr. Farish, as she does not figure prominently in this history, her name will be but casually mentioned hereafter. Bertram was still single, and had opened his law office in New York the fall his sister Jeanette married. Professor Cline and his daughter Clarise, still dwelt at their country home. I had kept up a regular correspondence with Bertram, and the professor, during the four years. A few letters also passed between myself and Clarise, which proved more conclusively that I was not mistaken in her rare gifts of mind and heart. I did my best in answering them,

keeping back all that would as much as tinge a word, or sentence, with the love I still bore her. Her letters were a rare treat to me, and the greatest pleasure and delight I knew, was when employing my leisure time in answering them. The last few received, although months apart, seemed to be impregnated with a note of sadness, but so delicately hidden that I could liken it to nothing but a low sweet strain of music, so softly touched on key, or string, that it could hardly be detected only by the most acute and sympathetic ear. So it was with my heart. It felt this strain of sadness, perhaps long before Clarise herself was aware of it.

Now if these dear old friends of mine, had known of my visit to New York City, it would have interfered with the plans I had mapped out for myself, and the course of action I wished to pursue. Therefore I did not intend to inform them of my whereabouts, until the fall before my return home, that is if I did go back to the West and my own city.

I intended after a few days rest, to hunt up Eugene Lunis and his mother, and learn if Nina had returned to the paternal roof. I had but one letter from Gene, and that was about six months after I left New York City. Nina had not then been seen, or heard from, and he stated that his mother and himself, had given up all hopes of ever seeing her again. But he added, "I will never give up searching for her, all the time I can spare from my work, will be devoted to looking for her. This I will do until life ends." I also intended to see New York City, as I had never seen it before, and make thorough work of it letting nothing deter me from this purpose.

I remained in my room, all day resting, until time to dress, for dinner, which I enjoyed greatly. After dinner I lighted a cigar, took a seat outside, it being quite warm in the large salon of the office. There were several men seated outside, two about my own age, the others older, their ages varying from thirty-five to forty-five. The youngest of the two young men, was quite a handsome fellow, a swell, but of exceedingly blazé appearance. He talked away to his companion, in the

same broad drawl as Oswald de Coute, which the upper swelldom of New York City affect, they drop their R's and accentuate their A's. The southerners, do not drop their R's so much as they roll their tongue softly over them, as if pushing them out of their way.

"Say, Benson, who do you suppose is back from Long Branch, that young Madame la Countess Palermo." I sat with my chair, tipped back, against the railing of the entrance to the hotel. At the hearing of that name my feet were drawn under me and I fell forward, bringing my chair with me, but fortunately I was not discovered, and I soon recovered myself, relighted my cigar, tipped my chair back again, and lent my ear, to listen. "They say the man, behind all her wealth is a mere shopman, a merchant, I don't believe it. I saw her in her box, at the Opera, a few weeks ago, before Guezette left, I thought her the loveliest, and most magnificent looking woman in New York; she shared the honors with Guezette. There was Bill Astor, the Count Pere Le Croixe, and Tom Duke, all fine-looking men, representing family, wealth, and position. I sent her a fifteen dollar bouquet of white and pink roses, but she returned it with thanks, but with a smile, that I never saw on a woman's face. I just wilted she looked so beautiful."

"My dear Bill, I would advise you not to bother your head about this fair Countess, perhaps not a Countess at all—but an adventuress.

"Oh, yes, she inherits the title from her father."

"Even so, she seems to me to be acting a part, she's the kind of woman that wants men's worship, but it must be hands off, like the song, 'Thou art so near, and yet so far,' bah, too many good fish in the sea, and in the market too, for a fellow to make a fool of himself, for even the beautiful Countess Palermo."

With that he rose, the younger man, rose also and followed, they walked towards Fifth Avenue.

Nina Palermo, the Countess, impossible, I said to myself, I saw her enter that house, besides she could play no such rôle, as the woman these young men were speaking of. Impossible, absurd, I muttered, trying to dismiss what I heard from my mind. It was now dusk.

I threw away my cigar, which I had nearly smoked to the end, and walked to Twenty-third Street and turned off Broadway, walked east on Twenty-third Street until I came to Fourth Avenue, turned up Fourth Avenue to Twenty-F.— Street then to Third Avenue.

At first I had some trouble in finding the Lunis's number, as I wished to know if they still lived in the same place. The halls of the tenements here are poorly lighted at all seasons, and now that it was summer, the gas in the vestibule burned dimly. But I kept on walking, and drawing closer to Second Avenue when I came all of a sudden to a door that looked very familiar to me. The lower floors, on both sides of the hall, were dark, but I knew the house, and as I approached nearer, I saw that the parlor window was open, the blinds drawn up, and the inside shutters but partially closed. I drew still closer to the window, there was a faint light in the parlor, which seemed to come from the small bedroom, the portières had been taken down, and there was just light enough to distinguish objects in the little parlor.

I was gladly surprised, on recognizing the furniture, only there seemed to be more evidence of comfort, ornaments and such like. "Yes," I said to myself, "the Lunis's still live at No. 20 F. Street and they apparently occupy the whole apartment themselves, Nina must surely be home. I hastened away, not caring to be observed by the people, or seen by the patrolman, and arrested for a suspicious character, loitering about the premises, for the electric lights now flashed out in all their brilliance, and the people began to crowd the streets. I walked back to Sixth Avenue where I took a car, and rode to Fifty-ninth Street, the entrance to Central Park. Here I got out and strolled for a short while in the park, not going far; the pavements around the entrance were crowded with men, women and children, but where can one go in New York City that there isn't a crowd.

Leaving the park I leisurely walked toward Eighth Avenue and Broadway. Broadway ends here and the Boulevard begins, and it's here where the bicyclists concentrate for the ride up the Boulevard. They make a

beautiful sight, coming up one side and going down the other, looking like an army of noiseless spirits, with their burning lamps lighting them on their way to the shadowy land. I stood a few minutes on the corner watching the men and women, flying past me on their wheels, then turned and walked up about two or three squares following the Boulevard. Somewhere near Sixty-second or Sixty-third Street, there is a large open space for nearly a block, that runs back to Eight Avenue and the park.

I stopped here again a few moments to watch the bicyclists as it was more secluded, and not so light, I chanced to look down the street, and saw coming toward me a carriage driven rapidly. The driver was seated on the box, beside what looked to me to be a boy about half grown. The man driving was lashing his horses at a furious rate which caused me to fix my attention upon him, then I saw a woman thrust her head out of the carriage door window, but she immediately drew it back, as if some one inside were pulling her. In a second her head and shoulders appeared again, and she seemed to be trying to open the door, and at the same time making a desperate effort to attract the driver's attention.

Failing in this she put her hand back, and drew out something like a parasol, leaned farther out of the window, and began to poke at the man on the box, as if trying to strike him, but he only lashed his horses all the faster. Then head and shoulders disappeared in the carriage, as if by the sudden lunge of the horses forward she was thrown back.

I left where I stood, and hurried toward the carriage, as I neared it, and it me, the head thrust itself out again, and I heard a voice faintly say, "Stop! stop! let me out!" and I saw the head was that of a young girl. I hurried into the road, the carriage was close to the pavement, although the Boulevard is wide, there are several lines of cable car tracks, besides the trees in the center that divide the different tracks. I raised my cane, and commanded the driver to stop, but he only whipped his horses, so they reared up on their hind

legs. "Stop the carriage and let the girl out," I cried, or I shall call the police, stop!" I commanded, catching hold of the horses' bridle, and bringing all my strength to bear, I held them in check.

By this time quite a crowd of men, and several women, had gathered about me, and with the help of some of the others, I guided the horses to the curb. The driver got down from the box, so did the boy, and stood by the carriage door, there was no one in the carriage with the girl, but she seemed to be in a stupefied condition, as if she had been drugged.

"You are evidently keeping this woman in this carriage against her will," I said, "and conveying her somewhere she don't wan't to go; you must open the door, and let her out."

"She was put in my charge, down town, by two ladies, and one man, and I was ordered to take her to her home, to a certain number on a certain street not far from here. I will not let her out of the carriage, you Mr. can get in an drive with her, an I'll deliver her at the number stated."

"No I will not go into the carriage; the woman is a stranger to me, but I will see that she is protected and taken to her home, or wherever she wants to go." Quite a large crowd had gathered about us now.

"You'll have the Cops here in a minute Mr.—they'll arrest me an take me down, an throw the woman into prison, an she can have a tumble with the rest of thim, an I'll be dm—n if I'll be fined." And with that he started to jump on the box.

"Hold," I cried, "you must let the girl out, and she can speak for herself, and I pushed the boy who stood by the carriage door aside, and as I did, my eyes rested on a woman, making her way through the crowd. For a moment I was stunned with astonishment at her appearance. She raised both hands with a peculiar gesture, like one separating something, the crowd parted as if by magic, to let her pass; she looked me full in the eyes as she drew near, even the boy and the driver fell away before her, without a show of resistance. In a second

she had the carriage door open. "Come," she said to me in a voice soft and musical, yet firm and commanding in its tone, "be kind enough to assist me to get her out. Make haste," she said, as I stood looking at her in a dazed way, "we must get her out and away from here before the police arrive. She does not live far from here; I know where she lives. She has been drugged, at least the wine or whatever she drank has been drugged, which is frequently done."

"Allow me, Madame," I said, placing both my arms about the girl, and lifting her out bodily, and setting her on her feet on the pavement. The driver jumped up on his box, the boy following him, whipped up his horses, and in a second was out of sight. I placed one of the girl's arms in mine, my Lady, taking the other, we walked her slowly through the crowd, a few of the most curious ones following after us. Several times the girl's feet refused to move under her, and she came near falling, pulling us down upon her. Once or twice I was forced to pick her up and carry her bodily for a square or so. After walking about two or three squares, and one towards Central Park, my Lady stopped before the door of a large, elegant apartment house. "Here," she said, "is the place. We must try and get her in as quiet as possible."

We carried her up the wide stone steps to the vestibule, where my Lady rang one of the many electric bells. In a moment it was answered by the latch of the big front door falling. "Ah," she cried, with a sort of suppressed triumph, as we entered a handsomely furnished hall, having some distance back from the door a wide winding stairway, "we have gotten ahead of the police to-night. Now how will we take her upstairs without noise; we must not let the janitor hear us."

"I am quite strong," I replied, "she is but a slim girl. I can carry her to the second floor."

"Her apartment is on the third floor, but there must be some one at home."

I took her up in my arms, and carried her to the second floor. Just as I stood her upon her feet, a negro woman made her appearance.

"Bless de Lod, chile honey, if it bene Miss Ada. She's bene gone since monin'. Ise jest knows dis I'd be de way, when she go wid dose two women. Dat Mrs. Jones an Madame Sqares."

"Here," I said, "take hold of her arm, and help us up with her, for she was heavier than I thought when I started up the stairs. When we reached the third landing, one of the doors of the girl's apartment stood open and a woman of about thirty years of age stood near it, when she saw us she came forward. "M-m-m," she said, in a French accent, and with gesticulation, "Mam-sell Ada, what ize ze matta, wake up." The black woman left us, and my Lady and myself led and half carried the stupefied girl into what I took to be the dining-room. It was brilliantly lighted, and furnished elegantly; in the center of the room stood a square dining-table of antique oak, and upon it was a silver salver with wine glasses, and two handsome cut glass decanters filled with wine and liquor, beside this laid a half smoked cigarette. The black girl led the way into a small bedroom off the dining-room, and here we laid the half dead bundle of flesh, muslin, India silk, lace and blond hair. Then for the first time she spoke, opening wide two large lustrous blue eyes.

"You get out of here, or I will throw this pillow at you," she cried, raising herself up in the bed, and reaching for the pillow. "It's you and the likes of you that has brought me here. Caroline put him out; I hate the whole race of men; I could slay them in their tracks where they stand. I could run a dagger through their hearts with the best grace in the world, and never repent of it. I have been drugged again Caroline, and it was that rich Perkins who did it. I went to dinner to—with Amelia, and Madame Skyare; we had a room all to ourselves, and we were not long there before young Perkins came; he's in love with me, and wants to get me away from Billy. It was made up between him and Madame Skyare, I am sure of it now. I didn't drink but one glass of champagne; I am positive now it was tampered with.

"Oh," she went on, raising up in the bed again, for

she had fallen back on the pillows and began to cry, "what would Billy say if he knew I deceived him like this. Oh, he must never know, Caroline, you must never tell him. Oh, I have fallen so low, and through no particular fault of mine." Then she began to curse and swear at herself and Perkins.

I left the room, crossed over to the door, and stood there waiting to escort my Lady out, when she was ready to leave. She stood by the bed of this poor unfortunate frail girl, who was exceedingly pretty, very fair, with small delicate features, and was dressed in exquisite taste.

"Hush-sh-," said my Lady, kneeling down by her bedside, "you must not take that name in vain. The Christ, whose name you profane, was so pitiful, so merciful, to such as you. Thank Him that you have been saved from the awful degradation, the fearful experience if you survived it, the memory of which you would never forget until the grave covered you. You would have been taken to some house by the driver of the carriage, and perhaps Perkins would have kept you there until he saw fit to let you go. Besides the police might have arrested you, and dragged you to the station, where you would probably spend the night with thieves, and the lowest and vilest of your kind. You would have to appear at court in the morning, be fined, and your name heralded all over the country by every newspaper of New York City. I do not know what this young man's creed is, but his act in rescuing you was Christian."

"Who are you?" asked the girl, raising the lids of her eyes with an effort, for she seemed to have no power to keep them open. "Who are you," she asked again after a long pause, and steadily gazing into my Lady's face. "Where did you come from, I have never had a woman speak to me before like that. I have never seen a woman look like you. Are you really a woman?"

"Oh, yes, my poor girl, I am a woman, an humble follower of the merciful Christ I just now spoke to you about; I am his witness."

"Oh," cried the girl, covering her face with her hands,

the fingers of which were covered with rings, "I am a bad woman, I have fallen so low. Go away, there is no hope for me, you cannot raise me from the depths of degradation I have fallen into. Go away, go away! if I had a brother or some one who would shoot Perkins. I will kill him myself. Go away, go away! you can't help me," and she fell back again on the pillows.

"Oh, my poor girl, do not talk in that strain. There is one who is always ready, always compassionate. He came down from heaven to live among us, and teach the children of men. To show us the way to freedom, life and happiness. He can save you, and lift you up out of your degradation, and give you a blessedness you would never dream of if you will but ask Him for strength to turn aside from your sins, this awful life. It is not life, it is slavery of the worst kind. If you are willing to seek, you will find; He stands ready with arms outstretched to receive you, if you are willing to pay the price."

Let me give you a glimpse of my Lady, which title I give her for the present, as she sits by the bedside of this unfortunate girl. Her age (that is if such a woman could at any age, ever be old), at this time I should guess to be from thirty-five to forty, tall and of majestic figure, and mien, with a grave stateliness of manner. Hanging from her shoulders is a long black silk mantle, which since entering the house, she had thrown back, letting it fall off upon the chair she was seated upon, showing a white dress made of some soft material. The bodice was tight fitting, buttoning clear up to the throat, where it was finished with a crush collar of satin. The skirt hung in wide loose folds down to the toe of a black low shoe, that shod a foot small for one so amply built, and of such grand proportions. And her face, what shall I say of it, so beautiful in its grave serenity, the complexion pale, the features finely cut, but of marked character, yet showing great refinement. Her hair was abundant; a dark brown, the front hair made conspicuous by a streak of gray half an inch wide, looking like a fillet of pure silver, clasping the curls on her forehead. The eyes were large, and of a color hard

to tell, only that they were dark and deep, and fathomless. Eyes that seemed to look inward, and outward, and pierce into futurity.

Ah, me, it was not the beauty of outline of feature, complexion, hair, and eyes, that gave the face its attraction, and set it apart as one seldom seen, but the stamp of intellect, knowledge of human life, of trials passed through, a great sorrow of which she had risen phenix-like from its ashes. One of those who had come up through great tribulation, and whose robes were washed white in the blood of the Lamb. And with His seal upon her brow, the touch of His spirit vitalizing her soul, she went forth with strength and power, to do and to brave. Upon her head, which sat grandly poised upon a column-like neck, she wore a small white round straw hat, and wrapped about the crown was a white gauze veil, the ends coming down and tied to one side under her chin.

She rose from where she was sitting, and knelt down by the bedside and began to pray in a voice that it had never been my pleasure to hear before. She began lowly at first, softly, gently, pleading with the Father, for His Son's sake to be merciful, and pitiful to this erring fallen daughter, to touch her heart, to change it, to give her strength, to turn aside from sin, to come out and be free. Then her voice rose higher, and higher, like the strains of a flute, full of intense and passionate pleading floating up and about the room; then reverberated back, and up again, until it seemed like a trumpet piercing the walls, and ascending up till it touched the throne of God.

I looked towards the French woman, who sat in a large easy chair, by the table, smoking a cigarette, she smiled and winked, and pointed her finger towards the door of the bedroom. She had offered me a cigarette when I first left the room, also a glass of wine, both of which I declined. "Oh, *Mon Dieu*," she exclaimed, as the force of the prayer struck her, and taking the cigarette from her mouth, she threw it into the grate, and fell upon her knees muttering, "Zat ize ze way wize ze

prayin' womanze. Za go on awfully, za make me cry. Oh, holy Mother, we ze bad zet."

I had also bent the knee when my Lady began to pray; when she finished the young girl on the bed was sound asleep. "I will come in the morning," she said to the black woman, whose face was an ashen hue, and her eyes gleamed upon my Lady with something of awe, fear and reverence mixed. "Tell her I shall be here early, and not under any circumstances to go out." She drew her mantle up about her neck and shoulders, left the bedroom, and beckoned to me to follow her, as she passed out the door into the hall.

I would have followed her any where now. I saw nothing, heard nothing, and was interested in nothing, but her at the time. I bowed to the French woman who stood near the door, good-night, and followed on after my Lady. When we reached the street she turned to me with a beautiful smile, and said, "I am so pleased to find a young gentleman gallant enough to protect a woman simply because she is a woman. You have no idea how it gladdens my heart. Are you a philanthropist?"

"Oh no," I answered her, "I fear I am nothing but an idle fellow, a sort of a dreamer, who likes to go spooking about, more for my own gratification than for any good I may accomplish."

"It is the dreamers who make the world move. They are the men and women who do the thinking. All the progress, the upward, and onward movements, the great ideas put into use that have bettered the condition of the human race, have come from the men who have been scoffingly called by their fellowmen, 'idle dreamers.' The world is apt to treat these men with scorn, and speak triumphantly of men of action, but it is easy enough to act, when others have done the thinking."

"I have not just made up my mind as to what I do want to do. My home is not here, and the death of an uncle who reared me leaves me without any particular home."

"Then you are not a New Yorker. I thought so," she said, gravely.

"No, I am from the southwest; a city lying upon the banks of the father of waters, the Mississippi. But I visit New York frequently. I have quite a number of friends here. I intend staying in the city all summer, but wish to keep my presence here a secret so as to have all my time to myself."

"Ah, I see," she replied, "I understand. I appreciate your motive, I know what the demands of the social world are. I have lived in it, it is a tyrant, a great eater of time, which one can put to more profitable use. The girl you rescued to-night from Perkins, and the police, was drugged; it's a frequent occurrence here in this great city. Perkins and the two women who placed her in the carriage had a hand in it. I suppose the women did it for money. The girl has been with them since eleven o'clock this morning, so the black woman told me."

"Has she a husband?" I asked.

"I suppose she is the mistress of some man; I know her by sight as I do hundreds of her class, but nothing of her history. Likely she is some girl, of good respectable family, from some of the country towns around New York; they are more easily led astray than city girls of the same place in life. There are hundreds, and thousands of men and women in this city who recognize no law, no God, or His commandments, or the saving grace, or power, or spirituality of Christ Jesus. They know no law but their own appetites, and the gratification of sensual pleasures; they feed, pamper the body, and starve the soul. It is the mode of life in these elegant luxurious apartment houses, which excites all the senses, and creates the feverish desire to gratify them."

"Then I am not mistaken; your observations agree with mine, that refined sensualism is the predominant vice of this great city."

"Mistaken, mistaken," she reiterated in a suppressed voice, and slackening her pace, "you are not mistaken, and I am pleased to know that your eyes are not holden, that you see and observe. Rome in the days of its power, its Cæsars, and Republic, was never more pagan, or voluptuous in its life, than the great city of New York.

It is not only in the case of the rich, but with all classes; Pompeii was never more licentious, even the churches here seem to have lost the tenet of Christ's mission and teaching, and materialism has deadened and stayed their spiritual growth. ' My kingdom is a spiritual kingdom,' He said. ' I came that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly.' Life," she cried, her face all aglow, and her eyes aflame, " why I never knew what it was to live before I gave myself to Him, to have ability, strength and power, and one cannot reach this without the highest purity. Why in this great city with its two millions of people, where so many lives are wrecked yearly, hundreds and thousands of men and women come seeking employment, and look in vain for friendly help to obtain work, grow discouraged and drift into the direst poverty; some to the slums, some to the pavement, and die unknown, unsought. Yes, this city the great pitiless jaguar that devours men and women, is no more to me than a rubber ball is to a boy, who tosses it up so that he may see it fall again.

" I have gone at midnight into the roughest, toughest quarters, into crowds where the worst element of New York congregated, thieves, pickpockets, thugs. Men wild with drink, stupified with whiskey, like the absinthe of the French that deadens all the moral faculties; men with a look upon their faces in which all the man, the image of God, was buried under the leering face of the beast. And with a light touch of this hand on their shoulder, they parted and made way for me, not an unkind word would be spoken. Some of these I have awakened by my prayers to a sense of their awful condition, and they would bow their heads, and beg me to cease before hell opened and swallowed them.

" I have gone into the houses of the scarlet women, whose grandeur, luxury, taste and appointments, could not be guessed from the home of the uptown millionaire; I have gone at night when the revel was at its height; when the shimmer and sheen of satin, and the shrough of silk, blended in harmony with the low sensuous strains of the walte. And bare arms, necks and bosoms, vied with the dazzling lights above their heads,

in the flash and gleam of their jewels. And youth, roses and perfume, went on in the mad dance, heedless of the hand that beckoned them on, and on, down, down to where? A little later they gathered round the card tables, and the laugh rang louder, while they quaffed the red wine, and the cards and dice were flung faster, and men drank fiercer as they bet thousands, and the corks from champagne bottles flew about my head. But I prayed on, and my voice went out and up in pleadings to the Master, until it drowned their carousals, and like Daniel in the lion's den, they sat mute and listened. The women would weep and beg the men to go home and leave them. Two or three years later I have met some of the gayest of these young things on the pave or in the prison cells, old, hardened and dissipated.

"I have walked these streets alone at two and three in the morning, and at every other step, men have spoken to me, but I let my mantle fall, and stretched out my arms," and she made the same gesture with her hands and arms, as she did when she made her way through the crowd that had gathered about the carriage, and they stepped aside and let her open the door."

"I mumbled out something about her being afraid to be out alone so late at night."

"Afraid," she exclaimed, "fear, and I about my Master's work! afraid, with the Lord Christ for an escort, and armed with the gift of the Holy Spirit! Oh no, I know no fear; you do not understand, you are but a novice, though I see the desire struggling in you, but you can enter in if you will seek, and are willing to pay the price. Yes, the police hate me; you know since Parkhurst got the Lexow committee together, and they have exposed the awful condition of things in the city, they dare not take money from these poor creatures, but they oppress them shamefully; they arrest them on all occasions, and on the least provocation drag them to prison; this only hardens and degrades them, and they sink lower and lower. It is all right enough to make laws to regulate these things, but you cannot make one code of morals for men, and another for

women. If I take a pure white piece of cardboard, so spotless that the eye can't detect even a speck of dust, and I take another piece white also, but soiled, smeared with smut, and I lay the two together, the spotless will become soiled with the soil of the other. So with men and women, their lives are inseparable, it's the law of nature, then why shouldn't both be clean? Why should we tie the pure and soiled together? why should we destroy purity by smirching it with disease?

"The only way to stop and stay this awful sin is to convict and convert the sinner. You cannot stop vice by law, you can regulate it, but the only refuge from sin is in One, and He Christ Jesus."

We had now reached the elevated station of the Sixth Avenue where she stopped. "I take the cars here," she said.

"But Madame," I exclaimed, "you will surely permit me to see you to your home."

"Not to-night," she answered.

"You surely will not refuse me the pleasure of further acquaintance with you. Do not I beg of you let it end here." She looked up in my face and smiled, a little boy might have seen just such a smile on the face of his mother, as he asked for something she did not deem it best to grant him just then.

"We will meet again," she said. "How soon I cannot say, but content yourself, we did not meet to-night to part, and go out of each others lives so soon. Oh, no, we will meet again, rest assured."

"But allow me to go up and put you on the car."

"If it's any pleasure to you."

She went on before me up the stairs; as we reached the landing the train came steaming in, I took her arm and led her to the car, took off my hat and held it in my hand until the train disappeared out of sight. I left the platform, went down the stairs, intending to go up on the other side to take the down town train, but when I reached the street, I changed my mind, and took a Broadway cable car back to the hotel. When I entered the office, I looked at my watch, it was just a quarter to two. I had no idea from the stir on the

streets it was so late. I made my way to the dining-room, and ate a light lunch, then went to my room and to bed, where I thought a long time over the incidents of the night, and my new found friend.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER FOUR YEARS, I FIND MYSELF ONE EVENING WITH GENE AND HIS MOTHER.

The next morning on going down to breakfast what was my surprise to find sitting opposite to me at table, an old friend of my uncle's, who had moved to New York City, from the West, ten years before. I recognized him immediately, and made myself known to him. He was pleased to see me, remembered me well as a lad. Had heard of my uncle's failure and death, which he deplored greatly, and inquired particularly about myself, and my future prospects. "I see, I see," he remarked, after a sip of his coffee, when I had related to him how I had been putting in my time, since my uncle's demise.

"Then you have taken to journalism as a profession, I see, I see. A good broad field for a young man of talent, and an inclination that way. Much liberty for evil, and also for good, yes, I see, I see. You will be in New York all summer, you say, now that makes me think. I am going out West, to California, and shall be gone until fall, I leave this afternoon. My house up town is closed, no one but old Michael and his wife there. My wife is in Europe, has been for the last year, and will be for a year to come.

"Now my lad, if you like you can go up and make yourself at home, in the big house. Library, drawing-room, music-room, with all kinds of musical instruments. Music was my wife's hobby, until she was taken ill, her health is still very poor, that is why she is now in Europe. There is everything to interest you, and plenty

of good restaurants and hotels around on the avenue. My cook has gone with the other servants off on a vacation, but Michael will attend to all the rest of your wants nicely. I see, I see. You can come right up with me and I will introduce you to old Michael and his wife."

I was more than delighted at this proposition from my uncle's old friend, it opened up to me all sorts of new vistas in the distance, of what might turn up between then and fall. I felt like the Frenchman, who was dining with a friend, and was asked by a bachelor, at dinner, if he were married, and on answering in the negative, his questioner replied, "Lucky dog, lucky dog." I was a lucky dog. To have a whole big house to oneself, in New York City, where people are packed together as thick as sardines in a box, means something. When we finished our breakfast we went to the office, and after paying my bill I ordered my baggage sent to No. — W. 80—S.—Street, then accompanied Mr. Quinton to his home.

It was one of those large New York houses, one of a handsome row of brown stone fronts, with nothing to distinguish it on the outside from its neighbors, but its number. But the interior expressed individuality, everywhere the eye looked. The rooms were lofty and elegant, and cool as the deep sea. In the furnishing there was that sense of harmony of color, the blending of light and shade, the richness of tone, which is so restful, and such a delight to the eye. After being introduced to Michael and his wife, as a friend of their master's, and one perfectly safe to occupy a room in the house during his absence we sat conversing in the library for nearly three hours, on various things. The presidential campaign and other issues, which were touched upon lightly, when the carriage called to take him to the ferry. He had shipped all his fishing tackle, tent and all necessaries for camping purposes, and was to join a party of friends that had preceded him, a few days before.

So I bid him good-by, with expressions of regret at parting so soon, and many thanks for his kindness, and took possession of a lovely room on the third floor. "You can have any room in the house you wish," said Mrs.

Michael, a round plump Irish woman, with a good-natured face, set off with wavy iron-gray hair. "Mr. Quinton tole Michael, to see that you were made comfortable an to attind to yere wants, an if he forgits, I won't. Strangers might think Michael a little daft at times, but it's only that he goes about kinda mopey like. But he's cliver for all, an is trusty as the day's long. Mr. Quinton knows that, he's known Michael for tin year, thin I'm always at Michael's back, so what he lacks, I makes up." With that she left me, to enjoy my room, as she said, going out the door.

I waited in the house until my baggage came, and I had Michael help carry it up to my room. Michael appeared to be anything but a man that would be apt to go daft at times. I found him a quick-witted, strongly built, shrewd old Irishman, but like all his countrymen in New York, and like the men and women of other countries, as well as Americans, he was fond of his little drop. About five o'clock I took a Broadway car to the Brunswick for dinner. After dinner I sat outside smoking until about dusk, in hopes of again meeting my two young gentlemen friends of the night before, but they did not show up while I sat there.

It was nearly eight, when I wended my way along Broadway, until I came to Twenty-third Street. The long summer twilight of the North, makes it delightful to walk at this hour, and it is the hour I love most of all to meander about; either in country lanes and roads, or upon the city streets, and watch the shadows falling, lengthening, and blending the harsh outlines of the houses, their bold fronts receding like a face, whose features are too prominent, softened by the veil of gauze which covers it. The noises seem more hushed and fall upon the ear in harmony of sounds. When I reached Twenty-F— Street and Third Avenue, the streets were crowded with people, men, women, and children. I passed Third Avenue, and was soon at the Lunis's number. The gas burned quite dimly in the vestibule, and I could hardly make out their bell, but after much groping around, I found it, giving it a light pressure with my finger; in a few minutes to my surprise, it was answered by Gene,

himself. He was dressed for the evening, in white shirt, dark necktie, dark coat, and light gray trousers, no vest.

"Does Mrs. Lunis live here," I asked. He looked at me a moment keenly, then exclaimed, holding out his hand, "I be dashed if it isn't Mr. Osgood, how are you? I'm so glad to see you. Come in, mother will be beside herself with pleasure at sight of you."

I followed him into the parlor. "Sit here," he said, drawing out the best armchair, and I will go and tell her, there's a gentleman in the parlor wishes to see her, she is back in the kitchen."

He turned up the gas, and left me, as he spoke I could see that a more mature manhood had replaced the boyishness of four years before, and he had grown taller and straighter, with that sort of handsome ruggedness, which we see in men of his trade, when they are sober, intelligent, and of sound morals. After a short while he came back preceding Mrs. Lunis.

"Mother," he said, smiling at me, let me introduce _____"

"Why indeed, indeed," she cried, clasping her hands together, and stepping back a pace or two, then forward again, as I rose and held out my hand to her. "Indeed, indeed, it's Mr. Osgood, well dear sir, if you were Gene, an he had been away the years you have, an just come home, I couldn't be more glad an rejoiced to see him, than I am you." And certainly her face told more than her words, for it beamed upon me with that disinterested affection, which I think is peculiar to woman. "Sit down, sit down," she said, as Gene drew up a chair for her, and seated himself beside her, when I had resumed my seat. "You have changed greatly, Mr. Osgood, like Gene, the four years past sits well on you, it's a coat you fill out and fit nicely, nicely. Do you intend staying in New York?"

"I shall be here all summer; did I write you that I lost my uncle by death, about two years ago?"

"We never received but one letter, and that shortly after you returned home, you did not mention in that letter your uncle's death."

I then told them, that when I was in New York be-

fore and occupied the parlor we were seated in, I was heir to half a million dollars and over, but the great business depression which had fallen to our country, and especially the West, in the last six years, had swept away my uncle's fortune, which I thought was the cause of his death.

"Mother and myself knew you were a gentleman, born and reared, and a young man of means."

"Yes, Gene called you the Count incog."

After both expressed much sympathy for what they felt to be a great calamity to me, the loss of my uncle and fortune, I informed them that I had been ever since his death, engaged in journalism, and intended making it a profession.

"We are having lively times here this summer," remarked Gene, "it will be the hottest contested presidential election that has ever been in this country."

"On what side are you, Gene?" I asked.

"I think it little worth while to be on either side, Democrat or Republican," he replied with a shrug of his shoulders. "A man's vote counts for nothing in our country, in these days. The politicians and moneyed men, put the man they want in for president, regardless of votes."

"Then you think universal suffrage is not the panacea for all ills, that the men who fought, died, and bled for liberty, fraternity and equality to all men, believed it to be."

"I think if you could see the cheating, and the rottenness of the men who control the ballot box, you would say it is the greatest curse to our country, giving the vote without any qualifications to ignorant and unscrupulous men, the riff-raff of every nation under the sun, when but a few years here. So far as presidents are concerned, a man's vote counts little there."

"You mean, Gene, that there are a few men in the city of New York, of untold wealth, who make and unmake presidents; when it suits them to put a Democrat in, they put him in, the same with a Republican, just so they get their man, and fool the people?"

"If I am anything, I am a Democrat of the new school."

"Here's another," I replied, holding out my hand to

him, "I think all the young men are, who are not Republicans," and I shook the hand he proffered warmly.

"My dears, you must take into consideration the hundreds an thousands of poor workmen, who are threatened to be turned out of employment before elections, their wives and children threatened with starvation, if they don't vote for this man or that man. When hunger comes in the window, like love, principle flies out the door," said Mrs. Lunis.

"I know all about it mother, every workman with intelligence sees lots, and knows heaps, and more shame for the bosses. They are ready enough to close their grip on a few thousand dollar checks, and then force their men to vote for a man they curse in their hearts, and doubly curse the slavery that compels them to sell their birthright, like Esau, for a mess of pottage. But it's a long lane that has no turn. Now Mr. Osgood, when you get to be editor of a paper, I hope you will go in for the truth, and the right of every man to be free and untrammelled in action, free to live up to his principles."

"You can stake your life on that, Gene," I answered. After a pause of some moments I inquired, "Are you alone? There is one I hoped to see here, hoped she had long ago returned to you, and since I have been sitting here I have expected every moment to see her enter the room." Gene's cheek turned red, then pale, he dropped his head, and looked down at the floor. Mrs. Lunis, who I saw had aged more than the years warranted, since I last saw her, and the silver threads which streaked her dark auburn hair, were very observable, changed color, bowed her head and clasped her hands before her.

"Nina has never come back to us," replied Gene, gulping down something in his throat, which made him hoarse, "or has she ever been seen by any one who ever knew her, since the night she disappeared. I have used every moment I could spare from my work, to search for her; I have gone to every place of amusement and resort, of the highest and the lowest, in the city, spent money that I should never think of doing for high priced entertainments, in hopes through incident, or accident,

I might meet her, or some good fortune would throw us together. Sometimes I think she has left the city."

"That possiby might be," I replied, "but New York is a large place, and there is no where a woman, or a man, can lose themselves so completely as in a large city."

"Emma Cowen has been telling mother a lot of gossip she heard at the store, about some young Countess, who reports says, is the most beautiful woman in New York, she has the most elegant turnout, with footman and livery. She is seen at the races, the theatres and the opera, and lives up town, all alone in an elegant brown stone mansion. You know girls, working in large stores, hear a good deal of that kind of talk and foolishness. And she says it has gotten into her head, and she can't get it out, that this Countess is none other than Nina. But I take no stock in Emma's romancing; some reporter, for the want of news, has been writing up something about this beautiful Countess, or he's stolen it out of a book. If she were Nina, I would have met her somewhere and I would recognize Nina, under any circumstances, in the rags of a beggar, or the silks and velvets of a princess."

I sat dumbfounded at Gene's recital, and could not believe my ears, I thought of what I heard the two young men say at the Brunswick, but I made up my mind not to commit myself until further developments. I turned to Mrs. Lunis, and said, " Didn't I learn from you that Nina's father was a nobleman, a man of title and rank ?"

" He never spoke much about his family, sir, only so far that he gave every one to understand his father was a gentleman of high position in his own country. Any one could see that he himself, was a gentleman of birth and education. It was politics, I think, was the cause of the trouble; his father was opposed to the present dynasty, and his estates were confiscated. His father died in Paris. Nina has good blood in her veins, she was born in wedlock, an no better woman lived than her mother. She was of the working people, but honest, upright, intelligent, industrious, an virtuous: if these qualities count for anything. Before her mother died,

she left with me a package of papers, her marriage certificate, and a bundle of other papers, to be given Nina when she was of age. One day I was looking over some papers of my husband's, and came across them. Nina happened to be in the room, at the time, and I then and there gave them to her, saying you are a better scholar than I, take and keep them, and some day, get a lawyer to have them read, for they were written in the Italian language. I think she had them on her person when she went away, for they are not to be found among her things.

" But I think our Nina is dead, I had a strange dream about her the other night; I dreamed I saw her in a large room, surrounded by luxury, and brilliant with light. There was no person in the room but herself, an she was dressed all in white, an around her throat was a necklace of gems, that shone an sparkled like the sun's rays falling on water, an her fingers were laden with the same shining jewels. But her face, when she turned it to me, looked like anything but tha face of a young girl, who had gone wrong. It was white like her dress, an more refined than when she was here safe at home with us. At first I meant to be angry with her, for all the mortification an suffernig she had caused mesel an Gene, but the memory of her mother, who I loved, an she hersel when a little thing, playin with Gene, an how she grew up to be such a fine girl, like her mother, so industrious, an good to me an lovin, prevented.

" My heart filled to burstin an I fell down upon my knees, an took her hand, to implore her to leave all this luxury an come home with me. An the jewels on her fingers blazed up in my face, like flames an sparks from a wood fire, an she looked down on me with such mournful eyes, an said, ' Mother, do you think I care for these rings and these gems, this house an luxury, you see here ? Oh, no, no, mother. Tell Gene I hate them, I could tear these from my neck, from my fingers, put them under my feet, an grind them to powder. Tell Gene,' she went on, ' tell Gene.' An with that I woke up, an my dream was so vivid, I could hear her voice for days after. In the

morning I told Gene about it, an I think she must be dead."

"Oh, no, mother, Nina's not dead. I think, though, she has left the city," replied Gene.

"I do not think she is dead," I said, "or do I believe she has left the city, I feel that she is still in New York; have you ever taken any steps, Gene, to see Delano?" I asked.

"Yes, about three months after you left us, finding Nina did not come home, I called one day at the store to see him, he sent down word by the boy, to send up my card. 'Tell Mr. Delano I am not a society man or a business man, but a plain mechanic, and have no use for the article, but if he wants my name, it is Eugene Lunis; I wish to see him on important business.' The boy came back with word that he was engaged, wished to be excused. I waited around for an hour, or two, thinking he would make his appearance about the store, but he must have suspected something, and kept out of sight. Mother said, it was providential I didn't see him, and begged me not to go again, but I did, and was refused on the plea of being engaged.

"Then I made it a point to leave off work about eleven o'clock; I have four or five men now under my charge, the boss turned them over to me to look after. They are the best carpenters, and we do all the fine work, and if there is any very particular work to do, I do it myself. So I could leave my work. I waited about the store at noon, for nearly two hours, every day, for weeks, thinking I might see him come out to go to lunch, or coming from it. I did the same in the evening, but failed to get even a glimpse of my man. I got Emma Cowen to find the street and number of his residence, you know he is married."

"Married!" I exclaimed, in astonishment, "it isn't possible."

"Yes, he has a wife and two children, so we learned. Mother kept constantly begging me to be patient and let things take their course, and your advice to me, Mr. Osgood, was not lost on me. I used to ponder over every word of what you said, and many a time when I came

home at night from my work, and she was still missing, I would call myself a dastard, to let these small worldly considerations stand in the way of my having it out with him. I would cry to myself, I must leave all, give up all, and everything, and throw down the gauntlet to Roscoe Delano. Watch for him, wait for him, track him to his home, and his haunts, and on sight kill him.

“While my heart, was stung, to action by these thoughts, and the love I bore her, mother’s face would rise up before me, and my duty to her would keep me back. I live in hopes, some day, though,” he went on, rising, and pacing the floor, “of some day having money enough to make mother comfortable, then I will devote my life, to finding Nina Palermo.”

Seldom a deep draught of sorrow’s cup, is quaffed in early youth, or the fibres of a great love, torn from the breast. It is only in maturer years, when they have taken root, and wound their tendrils around the heart-strings, that when stricken, we either sink under the blow, or meet it bravely, and come out stronger, better, and nobler. Gene had scarcely seen his twenty-second year, the boy, just standing on the threshold of the man, when the blow came quick and sharp, as the thrust of a Damascus blade, piercing as it were to the very core of his heart. The love for his beautiful adopted sister, his affianced wife, who had grown up side by side with him from childhood, the days, months and years, twining and knitting this love closer and closer, until he felt the awaking of the first sweet boyish passion.

To come home one evening, to find her gone, lost to him forever. This lovely pure girl, branded with a lie, a lie which every woman instinctively shrinks from, as she would the poison of an adder, for it slays, even if not guilty, all she holds dear. This crisis in his life, had stirred and quickened all his faculties to think and to feel, and the higher moral nature, which might have slumbered and perhaps in time become dead to action, had grown and strengthened in the four years passed, and developed the boy of twenty-two, into the tall, slim, broad-shouldered, strait-limbed man before me. With his knit brow, where the traces of conflict rested, in ver-

tical lines between the eyes, which were keen, deep, and saddened by the tragedy, the first act of which had been played, with he himself one of the actors.

How I admired him, as he walked the floor before me, wrestling with his splendid sorrow, a great love, stripped of all that is base, sensual, selfish, all that is merely passion, the thing most men term love. It was one of those moments in which one feels their own deficiency; I wanted to rise, and throw back my shoulders, straighten out my limbs, and tell him I loved also, with a hopeless love, and I felt glad my uncle's half-million of dollars was lost to me forever, like him, I would be made better by work, by being useful employing the gifts God gave me.

"I forgot to tell you that Emma Cowen informed us, that Delano is now one of the partners of the firm," he said, still pacing the floor, "you see his villainy does not seem to hurt him, such men prosper for a while, but it seems he has made fast strides to fortune."

"I fear, my son, we are making Mr. Osgood's visit rather sad for him," said Mrs. Lunis, resting a kind glance on me, my face expressing much of the feeling that was passing through my mind and heart.

"I am deeply interested in whatever concerns yourself and Gene," I replied, "and my sympathy goes out to both you and him, in this affair of poor Nina's. I will do all I can this summer in helping Gene to find her, if she is in New York City. There are doors open to me from old associations, and as a journalist, which would be closed to Gene, this may lead to some clue of her whereabouts, which will help us to her discovery."

"Excuse me," said Mrs. Lunis, rising and leaving the room, as she did she beckoned to Gene to follow her. In a little while she returned. "Mr. Osgood, I am going to make bold enough to ask you to step out to the dining-room, to have a little lunch before going home. I would have brought it to you on a waiter, but I thought you would like a change of place, these rooms are so small and stuffy. I would rather have two or three good sized rooms than six of these little closets, sure they're nothing but closets."

"I told her that I was not only pleased to think she felt free enough to ask me into the dining-room, but I was delighted to go."

The table was spread with a snow white cloth, and set with pretty white china; after I was seated by Mrs. Lunis, she beckoned Gene to take a seat beside me. Our lunch was made up of a box of freshly opened sardines, of the best French brand, fresh cheese, pickles, soda-crackers, butter, a loaf of fruit cake, and a pitcher of iced lemonade. Mrs. Lunis poured into a dainty china cup, something better than all, and that was delicious coffee. I can sniff its flavor now as I write these lines.

"Mr. Osgood, you will certainly make mother vain, if you keep on saying all these nice things about her coffee, and her good cooking," said Gene, smiling, as I expatiated upon its fine qualities. "Mother is very ambitious," he continued, looking with a sly twinkle in his eye, as she poured him out a glass of lemonade, "she will be wanting to leave her son, and engage to the Vanderbilts, as head cook," and Gene laughed heartily.

"No indeed, indeed, all the money of the Vanderbilts, wouldn't be inducement enough to leave you, my son. I have never lived under any one's roof, but my father's, an my husband's, I married my husband in the old country, an now yours my son. Not but what there isn't just as good father's and mother's daughters, obliged to go to service in rich people's houses, as me, only I have been more fortunate." We were interrupted here by a knock on the dining-room door, when Gene opened it, Emma Cowen and a little boy, about nine years old, entered. He carried in his hand one of those flat board trays, covered with white paper, and holding rows of chocolate creams, and chocolate nut candy, each one about as big as a Damson plum, like the molasses bull's-eyes we used to buy when children. He was as straight as an arrow, with legs as thin. His face was as brown as a berry, and his small blue-gray eyes, shone out from under dark brows with an eager restlessness, mingled with a laughing intelligence. His closely cropped black hair, showed a curiously shaped head, running up like the large end of a pear, leaving ample room for brain,

of a certain kind. His blue checked gingham waist and yellow crash knee pants, were somewhat soiled, and with the old straw hat he wore on his head, made up his attire.

"Here's John Jacob Astor," said Emma, throwing herself into a chair, "he tells me he hasn't sold a cent's worth to-night."

"Not a cent," said the boy, holding out his tray, and sidling up to Gene, "ye see there isn't one missin an Ma'll give me Darby."

"Well, well, you will only have to bestir yourself all the more to-morrow," said Gene, lifting the boy's hat off his head.

With that the boy's glance rested on me, and it seemed to have measured me, for with a movement quick and graceful as a cat, he slid away from Gene, around behind Emma Cowen, and with his eyes dancing, and holding up his tray, he began seemingly perfectly oblivious of where he was, in a high childish tenor, "Candy, candy, nice fresh cream chocolates, chocolates, cent apiece,—cent apiece,—cream candy,—cream chocolates,—cream chocolates,—cent apiece,—cent apiece,—"

"How much will you take for your whole cargo, and sing that song over again," I asked laughingly.

"Cent apiece,—cent apiece,—" he sang out smiling, showing two even rows of white teeth.

"Not any less to sell out late at night?"

"Cent apiece,—nice cream chocolates,—made fresh this morning, cent apiece."

"How many have you?"

"Thirty."

He grasped the three silver dimes from my hand, shut his thin fingers tightly over them, then turned to Mrs. Lunis. "Won't Ma be glad, Mrs. Lunis, an she'll give me a heapin bowl of milk an bread for my supper." With that he made a leap past Gene and Emma, and flew out the door.

"Pete come back, and thank the gentleman for buying you out, you would have had to go to bed without your supper, if he hadn't bought you out."

He slipped back, put his head half way in the door.

"The gentleman knows it's business, an not a thankin matter," he said with a broad grin, and off with him, and up the stairs.

"That boy will never die poor," remarked Gene, with a roar of laughter.

"Indeed he won't," answered Mrs. Lunis, "his mother lives on the fourth floor, and makes all the candy herself, she is a clean, thrifty woman, and has three children younger than Pete, and the father peddles fruit."

"This is Mr. Osgood, Emma, have you forgotten him? You remember he lodged with us four years ago, an was with us when Nina went away," said Gene.

"I knew his face the minute I entered the door, but we were so taken up with Pete and the candy that I waited for a break in the conversation to speak. Pete's name is Jacob, so I added John and the Astor, for if ever there will be a second John Jacob Astor, he will be. As small a boy as he is, he has visions in his head now of millions of dollars." And Emma's small deep set eyes, twinkled with fun.

Emma Cowen was one of those slim wiry women, she was now about twenty-eight years of age, and had improved much since I saw her for the first time, the evening Nina left home, which was the first and last time I saw her until to-night. She was very neatly dressed, and I could see that the four years passed had toned down much of what was then crude about her, she was good-hearted, and I should judge exceedingly practical, and more inclined to the amusing side of life, than its serious side.

"Did Gene tell you that Roscoe Delano is now one of the partners of the dry goods firm, where I am employed? We girls are all glad of it, in one sense, we don't see so much of him, now. There is hardly a woman, in the work-room or behind the counters, or in any department of the house, but what hates and despises him, or a man, either, for that matter. Nina's disappearance and the part he played in it, was whispered about the store, soon after she went away, and became common talk. Of course, fitting and trying on as I do the ladies' dresses, I hear a great deal. You don't mind me speaking before Mr. Osgood, Mrs. Lunis?"

"No indeed, Mr. Osgood couldn't ha shown more kindness an interest in this our trouble, even if he had been Gene's brother."

"I knew he was in the family confidence, concerning Nina, which was the reason I spoke as I did. I don't think Nina's dead, or left the city, but I do believe this beautiful Countess, I hear so much about, is none other than Nina Palermo. Mrs. Lunis and Gene, pooh-pooh, at the idea, but you will see some day, I am right. I can see farther than a mile, if my eyes are small. Now Mr. Osgood, you go about a good deal among fashionable people, you must keep your eyes and your ears open, and be on the watch, for I feel sure you will hear or see something which will lead you to the discovery of Nina, and that this Countess is none other than Miss Palermo. I must go now, mother will wonder at me being out so late. Good-night, all," and she left us, and went up the stairs, to her own apartments.

In a few moments I rose to take my leave, telling Mrs. Lunis how pleased I was to see herself and Gene, and how I enjoyed the evening greatly, and that I would do all I could during my stay in New York, to find our lost Nina.

"You will come again, Mr. Osgood, to see us, come often, you will be always welcome."

"I will walk a few blocks with you," said Gene, taking his hat from a small ornamental rack, which hung in one corner of the dining-room. As I shook Mrs. Lunis's hand, I wanted to kiss her, as I would my own mother. I was alone in the world, and I felt drawn closer than ever, to this mother and son.

We had walked in silence, about half a block, when Gene turned to me and said, "Mr. Osgood, do you think there can be any truth in what Emma Cowen says about this Countess being Nina. I think it's all idle gossip, mixed with much of Emma's own imagination."

"There may possibly be a grain of truth in it. Nina is young and possesses unusual beauty, naturally intelligent, with much strength of character, she is a girl, who though she felt she had taken a misstep, would

never sink, or become low, while perhaps not moral, she would be capable of playing a part."

"Yes, she would," replied Gene, after a pause, "she was very bright, and very determined; she didn't have so much education, and no accomplishments. We were poor people, and could not afford to give them to her. Mother sent her and myself to the public school, where she passed from the primary to the high school, where she went two years. That is all the education she or myself received." After another long pause, he asked, "Do you think this Delano is still mixed up with her life?"

"I cannot say, if he is, I pity him. Nina, from her nature, couldn't but hate him, and hating him, she would leave nothing undone to ruin him, as he ruined all she loved, and held sacred."

"You're right, Mr. Osgood, well, I will leave you here, come again soon, and we will have many a long tramp together, this summer. Good-night."

"Good-night, Gene."

I stood a moment, watching his tall, straight figure, making long quick strides down the street, until it was lost in the shadows of the great high dark houses, and the sound of his footsteps upon the stone pavement, grew less and less, and died silently away. "Poor Eugene," I thought as I took the car, and I pitied myself, too, as we sometimes do.

CHAPTER III.

ALL THE INDIGNANT JEALOUS ANGER OF THE MAN
IN ME ROSE UP AGAINST HER.

A week after my visit to the Lunis's, I met and was introduced to a Will Stebbins, a young reporter on the New York Herald. He himself, was a New Yorker, born and reared in the city, and a very bright fellow of twenty-five or six years. I invited him to lunch with me and we had

quite a talk. The Herald was then plunged in Gold Democracy. He was a Bryanite himself, most of the young men of the Democratic party were. "It's not my fight," he said, laughingly, "when it comes to casting my vote, that's another thing." Then the conversation drifted to various topics, the theatres, and summer operas. He was quite enthusiastic over the young French actress, Anna Held, who had just come to New York, with a burlesque troupe from Paris. "Sings like a bird, and dances like a fairy, and has eyes, hm-m—the most glorious dark eyes, hm-m," and with that he looked at me and laughed, "they go right through a fellow, hm-m." And he laughed again. "He was writing her up for the Herald," he said, and would give her a good send-off. I made an engagement to go with him that evening, and was to meet him on the corner of Thirty-third Street and Broadway, at half after eight. I had dined at a small restaurant on Ninth Avenue, one I had discovered by accident; it was kept by a Frenchman, and was not only clean and homelike, but had a touch of the picturesque and artistic as well, with its singing birds, flowers and plants, also a talking parrot of great beauty of feather, hung in a gilded cage, over the counter. Besides, my order was always well filled and cooked to a nicety. The old Frenchman, who was as picturesque as his *salle-a-manger*, evidently knew his business.

After dinner, I returned to the house to change my light coat for one more suitable for the theatre, and to get my gloves and cane. When I finished dressing, I came down, seated myself on the front steps to finish my cigar, for I had at least half an hour or more before starting. The dusk was creeping on, and in a little while the electric lights on the avenues flamed up, crowding out the soft lingering twilight of the summer evening. The block the Quinton mansion stood on was a long one from avenue to avenue, and with the great high brown stone houses, most of them closed for the season, and the gas lamps far apart, gave it a very sombre appearance.

I had seated myself about the middle of the steps, and as my eyes glanced towards Ninth Avenue, I was attracted by the tall figure of a woman, walking towards me. I

could not be seen as the railing of the steps hid me from view, and the balustrade was on a line with my hat. As she drew nearer I was struck with her bearing; the proud carriage of the head, the sweep of her garments, so unlike the modern street dress worn by woman, for hers seemed to hang in full free drapery, from her shoulders down to the toe of her shoe. When she reached about the middle of the block, she stopped, hesitated a moment, and looked about her (there was no other person on the square at the time), then down at her shoe (I supposed the string of her shoe, had come untied). As she stood there, her face was turned away from me, nor was she near enough for me to see it plainly, only in obscure profile. Besides instead of a hat, she wore tied about her head, a black lace scarf, such as Spanish or Italian ladies wear, its long loose ends hanging down her back, as if she had just run out to a neighbor's, or up to one of the shops on the avenue.

As she came nearer I threw away my cigar, dipped my head, pulled my hat over my eyes, and slipped down a step lower, so as to have a good view of her face, as she passed me, but to my amazement, she stopped within a yard of the railing, looked about her again, and seeing no one, put her foot up on the stone coping which runs along the pavement inclosing the small court of the English basement, stooped down and tied her shoe-string. As she lifted herself up, the light from a gas lamp a few doors below me, shone full upon her face,—Heavens—it was the face of Nina Palermo, and her eyes, for an instant, without knowing it looked straight into mine.

My heart gave a great thump, then seemed to stand still, the blood freezing in my veins, and as she passed on looking straight before her, I fought with myself to rise. Oh, I must follow her, I must, I must, I cried between my shut teeth, at last I found strength to get up. She had nearly reached the corner, but I soon came close upon her. She crossed over where the Boulevard runs into Tenth Avenue, and walked until she came to a row of four or five new elegant-looking brown stone houses, five stories high, with the English basement. This row stood not far from the river, and has a good deal of va-

cant ground about it, with some old residences on the opposite corner. She went up the steps of the last one of the row, towards the river, opened the door with a latch-key, and entered closing the door after her. There was a light in the hall and to my glad eyes, it showed the number on the glass above the vestibule entrance. The number was, No.—, West 80—S.— Street.

I took out my notebook, and with a trembling hand wrote it down. Then I stood a moment, a thousand conflicting thoughts running through my mind. I walked up and down in front of the house, my brain all in a whirl, and my heart churning like mad, the blood seething to my temples, and almost blinding me. Once or twice I stopped before the front steps thinking I would go up and ring the bell, but I did not know what name to ask for. To ask for Miss Nina Palermo, would be to frighten her, to put her on her guard against those she wished to hide her identity from. No, the best thing to do would be to wait and see what a few days, or a week might bring forth. I must make my plans, and even Gene must not know, must not be told just yet.

I must find out more about her life, was she the mistress of this splendid mansion, or only an inmate? Or was she the Countess who Emma Cowen talked about? Well, so far as her appearance went to-night, she might have been a royal Duchess, she looked so grand, so proud, so Juno-like, as she walked the pavement coming towards me. As I paced up and down, I grew more calm, then I observed through the slats of the dining-room windows, in the English basement, a dim light burning. I glanced from there to the floor above, and saw a black man who I took to be the butler, touch a match and light the gas in the drawing-room, then draw down the blinds and close the shutters, I could do no more to-night, and as I stood a second watching the great house, my blood ran through my veins again with the natural delicious warmth of youth, and a feeling of exultation such as I had never before experienced, held me spellbound for some moments. Yes, I, Beverly Osgood, had found the lost Nina, lost no longer, yet it

had fallen to me to locate her. What would Gene say when I told him ?

I thought then of my engagement with Stebbins, I looked at my watch, it was a quarter after eight, I would hurry to the station, take an elevated train down town, and not be more than a minute behind.

“ I beg a thousand pardons,” I said, as I met my friend of a few days, standing at the foot of the stairway, “ I was unexpectedly detained. I hope I have not kept you waiting.”

“ Don’t apologize, I have been here but a few moments, I had but to step from the Herald office, and you had to come quite a distance,” he answered. In a short while we were comfortably seated in the parquette of the theatre, three rows back from the stage. From our position, we had a good view of the whole house, and especially of all the private boxes. Stebbins was to wait for the first and second act only, as he was booked for several other theatres, I intended to see the play out.

The house was crowded, the audience brilliant for a summer one. Who they represented in the New York world, I could not say, but they were very fashionable people. Those who had private boxes engaged, kept straggling in late. Anna Held had made her appearance in one song, and had left the stage, when Sir Rod-erick came on. I cast my eyes over the audience, and observed that the private boxes in the dress circle were all occupied but one in the center to my right. Just then there seemed to be a hush in the crowd, then I observed the turning of heads from the stage to the right, and the levelling of opera glasses. I turned also to look; as I did, my glance rested on the box, which a few seconds before was empty. I fell back in my seat, my arms hanging at my side, my eyes riveted on the box. “ It is she,” I cried inwardly, “ or is it a dream, or am I mad ?” For there in the box was Nina Palermo, and the handsome dark man in evening dress with her, was none other than my friend of years, Bertram Ar-lington.

Shall I ever forget her, as I saw her there in the midst of that brilliant throng, in the full glare of the electric

light; it recalled Mrs. Lunis's dream of her to my mind. On West 80—S.—Street, she wore all black, but now she was robed all in white, and looked to have grown two feet taller, in the last four years, and her form had matured in proportion. As she seated herself, she threw back off her shoulders, a mantle of white silk and lace, then I had a better view of her face.

How changed since I saw it first, the night long ago, when I occupied the little parlor in her mother's apartment, and played eavesdropper, and from the jar of the door, saw the dark girlish head silhouetted against the dim light, which came from the dining-room window. It was the physical beauty then, such as a baby, a child, or any young animal might have. But now the tragedy of that awful day, that hour in old Waite's office, where she stood with all a woman's outraged sensibilities, and threw back the lie in Delano's face, that he had branded her with. Then again hours later, when she stood at midnight, alone in front of that tall dark house, the conflict with herself, before taking the step which was to lead her where? All the passion, hate, suffering and agony of those hours, and the cost to her of the final resolve. All the poetry, and emotions of her life since, had been cutting and fashioning for the last four years, this strange and wonderful beauty, leaving their stamp upon her face, in which all the color of that time had left cold and white, as the dress she now wore.

But the great black eyes were there, their long black lashes, which threw a faint shadow over the cheek. The thick braids of lustrous hair were coiled on the neck back of the ear, and a bandeau of pearls clasped the curls on the low broad brow. A flat collar of pearls with the flash of large diamonds here and there, clasped her fair throat. But it was not her rare and costly jewels, or her rich silken robes, her unusual and striking beauty, the seemingly indifference to all and everything about her, but that indefinable something which marks and sets apart the few men and women of the world, from their kind, and which is beyond the power of pen to describe.

Bertram sat bending over her; with the exception of a smile now and then, that showed the lovely teeth, and

the arch of the short upper lip, the flashes of intellect expressed in every feature of her face, and move of her body, her bearing towards him was cold and haughty. He had changed greatly in the last four years, he was handsomer than ever, and had washed off all traces of the boy, home, and the country. Perhaps the heart and the affections were the same, but under more control, kept more in reserve. Yet to me who had known him since his eighteenth year, the city had done its work, it was the finishing school, and I could see had turned him out the elegant young man of the world.

The simple affections in which the heart plays a part were gone, or hidden under the polished exterior, but the passions were all alive. And whatever their relations were, Bertram Arlington was now suffering the pangs, as well as its little joy, of the passion of his life and manhood, and this passion was for Nina Palermo. Yes, I could see in the lingering wistful gaze, as he bent over her, and the darkness which would cloud his face, as she with an imperious turn of the head, would look away from him. If the consciousness of his indifference to the audience, the play, his efforts to please, to watch her every move, to listen with attentive ear, touched him for a moment with burning shame, he would then turn his face away from her to the stage, only to turn it back again, with an expression in the eyes, of a hungry animal kept at bay, that dare not touch the food that lies so temptingly before it. The look men have when the passion for an adored object is all aflame, yet is baffled at every step, and the woman is the master of the situation. All the indignant jealous anger of the man in me, rose up against her, who was she, this wanton, this cruel woman; was she going to be the destroyer of the friend and companion of my boyhood, the lover of the fair and pure Clarise ? This manly and big hearted Bertram, with his fine mental gifts, who in my boyish fancy I used to liken to some Roman senator, in the future filling the same position in his own country. Never, I could not bear it, I would not have it so. I would put forth all the power in me to stop it.

But alas, alas, other thoughts rushed upon me. Was she

not made what she was by his kind, by my own sex? Was she not branded with the mark of the scarlet woman by two men, old enough to be her father? Did her innocence, her youth, her beauty, helplessness, appeal to them in any way? Had she not been thrust out from her place among her companions, her friends, from among good women, because she would not sell her honor to the very man who was her accuser, to be one more of that awful army of lost women, who, like birds of the night, with wings outspread, swoop down upon the great city's streets, seeking whom they may destroy?

Did they heed her cry, to spare her from the damnable accusation, that would send her adrift into the streets? No wonder the iron of hate and revenge entered her heart and soul, and she vowed to be the destroyer of every man who came into her life, in the future. She, it appears, was one of the few of the many of old Waite's and Delano's victims, who kept above the slums, and the mire. Ah, yes, from her appearance on West 80—S.—Street, in the rustle of her black silken drapery, the great house I saw her enter, and now as she sat beside a son of an old, and wealthy family, a vision in white, a very queen, in her regal beauty and intellect, there was no trace of one who had fallen low, at least from the physical and material sense.

But all was mystery to me. Where did Bertram ever meet her, what chance threw them together? Where was Delano, and what part had he played in her life, since the door of the dark house on 20—F—St. closed upon her? Or was she Emma Cowen's Countess? All these thoughts were running through my mind, when I was brought to myself, by Stebbins nudging my elbow, and asking me if I were ill.

"Oh, no," I answered, "just a little surprised.

"Acquainted with parties in the middle box, above you, to the right? Quite a swell couple. The girl is beautiful. New York has fine, stunning looking women, dress well and all that sort of thing. But when you go about as much as I have, you will take it as a matter of course."

"It will be *l'homme blazé* with me, then," I replied

laughing at this man of twenty-six, with all the freshness of things rubbed off. "I am too much of a philosopher," I added, "to become weary of life; like the Greeks, I hope to avoid satiety, therefore I will never tire of the beauty and joy of living."

"Ah," returned Stebbins, with a chuckle, "I thought you were no western greeny. I tell you Ogsood, we New Yorkers get awfully taken in by you western boys, you see, like the Parisians and Londoners, a New Yorker comes to think there's nothing worth caring for on this side of the wata, but New Yawk."

"Oh it's a big town, no mistake about that," I replied.

"Will see you again soon, you'll stay until the play is over."

"You have my number and address, au revoir," I called after him, as he left the seat, and went through the aisle. I settled down in the corner of my seat, and remained there until the curtain rang down on the third act, the fourth act was the last. I stayed until the middle of the fourth act, and left the theatre, intending to wait outside until the play was over; I lit a cigar, and stationed myself in an angle of the building near the door I hadn't been there more than a few moments, when one of the messengers came and whispered something to the porter outside, and he called out a number of a carriage, and a fine spanking pair of bays, with gold mounted harness, an elegant landau, with footman and livery were drawn up, and Bertram escorting Nina, entered the carriage, and they were driven away. I stood a few moments, debating in my mind, whether to call a cab, and follow them, but what use, I had located her, and knew where Bertram's law office was, I could find him, any day, or hour, I chose to call on him. But to see her, was another matter. I could do no more to-night, but go home, and think it all out.

In a few moments, I was on a Sixth Avenue elevated car, speeding on my way home, and in a little while I was in my own room, at the Quinton mansion. Now whether it would be false or not to Gene, I must keep the discovery of Nina, a secret for the present, I must first solve the mystery which surrounds her. How came she to

this wealth, this place? Surely men like Bertram with family of the highest position, could not afford even in a large city, like New York, to run the risk of being seen in public, with the beautiful and fashionable mistress of another man. Where was Delano? kept repeating itself in my mind, for hours after I had retired. Was it his money she was spending so lavishly? Was she carrying out the revenge, she had sworn to do, to make him suffer, and curse the hour he had ever seen her, was she doing this now? I must find some way to see her, and the way I told my tired brain, was to go to call on Bertram, tell him all, and ask him to take me to see her, as soon as possible.

So my fair Nina, in a short while I shall know all. Gene said he would recognize you in any guise, would he have known you to-night, as you sat in the midst of all that brilliant throng, the observed of all? Hardly, because his mind had formed other images of you.

It was nearly daybreak, when I fell into a deep sleep, and was only awakened by old Michael knocking at my door, to ask if I wanted anything, which was a habit with him. "I thought mabe ye ware sick, yere ginerally up betimes in the mornin'."

"I didn't get to bed, and asleep, until late, Michael; what time is it now?"

"Eight o'clock, sur, an eight o'clock, of a summer mornin' is late sure. Well is there anything I can do for ye?"

"Not unless you take my shoes and give them a brushing, and my pants and light coat there." I knew Michael wanted a tip, and a dime and a quarter, made his bleary eyes dance. He liked his drop, and his tobacco.

I made haste and dressed, and breakfasted at the Frenchman's, and at ten o'clock was going down the steps of the Park Place station. Bertram's office was in the Tribune Building, and in a few moments I was there. Bertram had not yet come, it was his hour, and he was expected every minute, so the young man in the office informed me.

"Anything I can do for you sir?" he asked, and when I answered no, that I wished to see Mr. Arlington in

person, he invited me into a private room, to await his coming. I had my head turned, looking out of the window, when I heard a voice I would have recognized anywhere, or in any crowd, exclaim, "Goodness gracious, I be switched if it isn't Beverly, in the flesh ! Well dear old boy, this is just like you, to drop down from the clouds. Why didnt you wire a fellow, but come to think there are no wires up in cloudland," and we both laughed, and shook hands heartily.

"When did you arrive?"

"About three weeks ago."

"And never dropped in or let a fellow know you were in town. Up to your old tricks, I bet. Where now Beverly, up in some attic or down in some basement on the east side," and we both laughed heartily again.

"Oh, no my dear sir, I was never more princelyhoused, except in your father's palace, at Anlace. I ran across an old friend of uncle's, at the Brunswick, the morning after I arrived here, he was a resident of my city, before he moved to New York. He sat opposite to me at the breakfast table, and recognized me before I did him; he was going to leave for the West that day, and I had just come East. After I had informed him of my plans, and what I had been engaged in since my uncle's death, and my purpose in coming to New York, he offered me the hospitality of his house on West 80—S.—Street. He was going as far as California, and would be gone all summer, and I expected to remain here for the same length of time, and perhaps longer."

"Quinton, Quinton, he lives on West 80—S.—Street, father knows him well, he and his wife have been to Anlace a number of times. She's musical, and something of an invalid, a pretext they say for living abroad a good deal. So that is your address."

"Yes, I have full swing there, I can meander around the streets all night, and no one to say a word, but old Michael and his wife, the caretakers of the big mansion, under whose protection Mr. Quinton left me. Michael is a shrewd old fellow, he pretends to exercise over me *un corps du garde*, and I humor him, by dropping a shin-

ing eagle in his palm, now and then. I am a lucky dog in many ways, and unlucky in others."

"Well so you're not unlucky in love, you are blessed," he answered, laughing, but his laugh, sounded to me somewhat forced.

"Cupid, the young scamp, seems to fight shy of me, but you, I considered when here before, to be one of the most fortunate of men, in that respect." He rose from his chair, turned his back to glance over some papers, his clerk brought in, and I thought as he did he sighed.

"My dear Beverly," he said as the young man left the room, "perhaps I was and perhaps I am yet. Clarise is as constant as Penelope, she goes on weaving, and unraveling at night, what she weaves by day. Well we were never betrothed, that is one thing I am pleased over now, but as my sister Jeanette says, men are strange animals, I fear we have not the loyalty of women. But isn't this a strange freak, you being here, I thought you would be up to your eyes in politics, now that the presidential campaign is on, or like Bryan, have you come to fight us on our own ground?"

"I am out of a job, I left the paper I was on, after I had reported the Chicago Convention, I could not conscientiously work for what I did not believe. There is no paper here out and out for silver and Bryan, but the Journal. The World, and the Herald, and all the many evening papers as well as the Times, are all for the single gold standard, therefore for McKinley. You are a Republican and of course a McKinley man."

"Now Beverly," he said, with his old affectionate smile, "supposing your uncle had not been unfortunate in business ventures, and you had come into your million or half-million of dollars, which was to be yours, don't you think you would be on the side of the single gold dollar?"

"Never," I answered, hotly. "I can't see the justice of any nation wanting to cramp and fetter half of its territory, and people; the toiler, producer and farmer, so that the few may rule. We are a large country, and require a great deal of money. Silver and gold has always been the money of every civilized nation, as far

back as we can trace. Silver and gold should be on a par, the white metal even dominating the yellow, because it is the more durable. Nature itself has made them twin brothers, and there is no natural law, or philosophy, by which we can separate them, and make the yellow metal tyrant of the white. To make laws, to debase silver, and cause the shrinkage of money to such a degree that it cripples the masses, and invest the few with power to put the yoke around the necks of the many who toil, is a crime. Some men when they taste a little of material power (for I don't acknowledge money to be power in its true sense), never know when to stop. Like Napoleon the First, they keep on going, and their thirst for this little pettiness becomes insatiable, and when they think they have reached the highest pinnacle of their ambition, a higher power steps in and topples them over, and great is the fall thereof."

"Bravo," cried Bertram.

"Then you are with us," I said, jumping to my feet, and stepping over to where he sat, I laid my hand on his shoulder, "I knew you could not have changed so much from the friend I had at college."

"Yes, Beverly, I am with you heart and soul, but not on the money question. You must come and hear me speak, Bryan is to be here next Thursday, Governor Altgeld of Illinois, is to follow, and I come in a week from next Tuesday."

"Well old boy, if that is the case we will put politics aside for this morning, I did not come to talk politics, Bertram, if you will just give me a little while longer of your time," I said, closing the door. "It was not my intention to let you know I was in New York," I began, resuming my seat "at least not until the fall, but something has happened, which I need your help to unravel. It is a long sad story, my dear fellow, a tragic one. You may not aid me, you may think I am encroaching upon delicate ground, intruding upon your private affairs. But I make bold to appeal to our friendship of other days, when we were boys at school, and our friendship now as men, and the love I bear you."

"Now Beverly, dear boy, what is it," he said, with

surprise and amazement expressed in every feature of his handsome face, "give me all your confidence, ask me anything, and say anything you want, but for goodness sake don't tell me you have murdered some one, and have come to ask me to defend you, for criminal law is not in my line." We both laughed.

"Oh, it's not quite so bad as that," I answered. Then I related to him, the whole story of Nina, beginning four years back, from the time I first rented the little suite of rooms in the summer of 1892 from her mother, in the tenement house, on the east side, on 20—F.—Street, between Second Avenue and the river front. Then I described to him the family of Mrs. Lunis, Gene her son, how interesting they were to me, what fine qualities, of mind and heart, were theirs. How I discovered the young girl, who Mrs. Lunis guarded so jealously, her beauty, her place at the large store, that she was Mrs. Lunis's adopted daughter, her father an exiled Italian nobleman, who married her mother, an Irish-American girl, herself handsome, healthy, and strong, and that this girl was the fruit of their union. The father dying, and the mother dying shortly after, leaving the little nine year old girl to Mrs. Lunis. Of Gene, her adopted brother, what a fine honest manly fellow he was. And how I followed her the night she was to go to the excursion with Delano, her running away from him, when she found he had deceived her. Then the trial at the store, the morning after, before Delano, and old Waite.

That Delano had branded her with a lie, and that she had never returned to her home, or had ever been seen since by her mother, or brother, though he had searched New York from its center to its circumference. I dwelt upon the suffering of her mother, and the splendid Gene, for his sister, his fiancé. The time I had to keep him from killing Delano, and how on my return here this summer, I had called at the Lunis's and found them still mourning for the lost girl. She had never been seen or heard from, although Gene had kept up the search for her, and how they had almost given her up as one dead. And now I continued, relating the incident of the tying of the shoe-string on the stone coping, as I sat on the

front steps of the Quinton mansion, smoking and waiting to keep my engagement to go to see Anna Held, with the young reporter. How I rose and followed her home, but had to keep my appointment with young Stebbins, and that I had not been long at the theatre, when I was nearly struck dumb, by seeing my old friend Bertram Arlington enter the middle box to my right, with Nina Palermo, the lost Nina.

"What," he cried, jumping to his feet, "Nina, the Countess Palermo, the lost girl, you have been telling me about? Oh, impossible, Beverly, impossible."

"No, my dear fellow, the young woman I saw on West 80—S.—Street, and followed to her home, No.—, and the one you escorted to the theatre last evening, is none other than Nina Palermo, the daughter of the Italian nobleman, and the adopted daughter of Mrs. Lunis, therefore the missing girl. Now Bertram, tell me how long since you first met her, where you met her, and how you ever came to get acquainted with her?"

"Give me time Beverly, give me time," he said, looking pale, and placing his hand to his forehead, as he rose and began to pace rapidly up and down the floor. "What you have told me is such a surprise. I have been living under a different impression of the girl. To begin with," he said after a few moments, and seating himself again, "about three years ago, the lady you saw with me in the box at the theatre last evening, came to my office, in company with a gentleman, it was about a month before he bought the house No.— you referred to just now, and wished me to transfer the deed to Miss Nina Palermo. The row of houses, of which this No.— is the last was built by my father's agent. At first I thought the man was the girl's father, although they bore no resemblance to each other, and when he came to give his name as Deland, I think, but you call him Delano, I knew then they were no father and daughter, besides I observed while he was remarkably shrewd in a business way, he acted very strangely towards the girl. One moment he would appear as if he was madly and insanely in love with her, and the next moment as if he could kill her from the same mad jealousy. While her

manner towards him, was frigidly proud and haughty. Once I caught a look in her eyes, as they rested a second on his face, and I can never forget it (I would never want a woman to look at me in that way), it was so full of scorn and loathing, and positive hate.

“They went away, and I could not forget them, at least not her. I thought her the most beautiful, the most magnificent creature in the way of femininity I had ever seen. It was not just her beauty, Beverly, a man meets many physically handsome women in New York, but the delicacy, refinement, and archness of her manner, and back of it, character, force intellect, the superior woman; all this tinged with a melancholy, which gave her an unspeakable charm. And the puzzle of it all was, what relationship existed between this strange pair? And it was what haunted me for days, and during these days, I lived upon the constant wish, and hope, that she would come to my office again.

“Well about three months after, she did call one morning, she came alone, and brought with her a bundle of papers, she wished me to look over, one was the marriage certificate of her father and mother, the other papers belonged to her father, and were written in the Italian language. I asked her to leave them and I would look them carefully over, and call upon her if agreeable; she appointed an evening, and after a short conversation she went away. The second interview seemed to dispel for awhile the first impression I had of her relations to this man Delano, but we will speak of this another time.

“I was not proficient enough in the Italian language to thoroughly digest, and understand the contents of the papers. So I had them examined by an educated Italian gentleman, who does that kind of work, and is himself, a descendant of an old Italian family. It seems that the father of Miss Palermo’s father, was Count Leanto Palermo, whose estates are in Lombardy; the old Count, it seems was opposed to the policy of King Humbert, after he came to the throne. He was accused of treason by the Viscount Junta, fearing arrest and imprisonment, he fled to Paris, where after several years

his eldest son, Miss Palermo's father, followed him, he was then just from the military school, his youngest son, remaining at school. The old Count's estates were confiscated, and the older son, came to America to seek his fortunes. While here he married as you know. But before he died, and while sick, word came to him of the death of his father, then he took worse, and a few days before he died, a letter came from Humbert, asking the return of the eldest son, to his country, his estates, and his King.

"He was dying at the time, and said nothing to his wife, of what happened or the contents of the letters, but rolled them up and handed them to his wife, and told her to hold them for their daughter. I called upon Miss Palermo, on the evening appointed, with the papers, and read them to her. I told her the only thing to do now was to write to Rome, and send copies of the papers. After spending a delightful evening with her, I returned to the hotel, and in a few days as soon as the copies could be written, they were sent to Rome. In about two months, there came a package from the High Judge of His Majesty Humbert's court, which stated, that the younger brother of Count Leonto was in possession of the estates, and title. The entailed estates went to the male heirs, but the income from his father's private property, would go to the oldest son, and from him to his daughter. An income from his mother's estate, would go to his daughter, also, and be paid quarterly, and her right to use her father's title. Since then I have been a frequent visitor to her house, she has never told me anything of her former history, only that she was brought up by this friend of her mother's, that they were like sisters, which is all she ever said."

There was silence for a moment, then I asked him, if he would grant me the favor to take me with him, the next time he called on her.

"Certainly," he answered, with a slight hesitation, then smiled and added, "if you will promise me not to fall in love with her."

"I will assure you, that there is no danger of that. I didn't when I first met her, I might have if I allowed

myself to drift into it, but my mind was so bent on my purpose, and so full of other things, that I had no time for love-making, and I am sure I will not now, although she is far more beautiful in every sense, than she was four years ago."

"Her 'At home' evenings, to her friends, are Saturdays, but I am going to-night. I have some business of hers, I wish to see about, suppose you come along?"

"Oh, most gladly," I answered.

"I will call for you about eight, this evening, do you think she will recollect you, Beverly?"

"Hardly; she didn't see enough of me to remember me, besides I have changed much; I have grown larger and more mature, I look ten years older, than I did at that time. She will never suspect me of being her mother's parlor lodger, just introduce me as a friend of yours."

"I shall be delighted to do so, then we can talk matters over after you have met her in her home. There is much I wish to say to you which concerns her and myself, but I see the office is filling up and there are clients waiting. I have a number of things to attend to for father, so be on hand this evening."

I left him with a swelling heart, with the glad anticipation of soon standing face to face with the lost Nina, and in a little while to bring the glad news to Gene, that I had found her.

CHAPTER IV.

I STAND BEFORE HER WITH BOWED HEAD.

At about a quarter after eight, Bertram and myself, stood at the front door of No.—, West 80—S.—Street, the residence of Nina, Countess Palermo. Our ring was soon answered by the black butler, I saw the evening before light the gas in the drawing-room. He treated

Bertram with all the civility and servility, of one who was a frequent visitor to the house, but looked me over as if he were taking an inventory of everything I wore, and my whole personal ensemble. Then he reached out a small silver tray, Bertram placed his card on it, so did I.

The decoration of the house, was something on the same order as Mr. Quinton's, the difference being in the furnishing. The whole effect as I entered the grand salon parlor, was of a golden silvery sheen, something like what we see in the eastern sky, of a morning when the sun is half obscured by a gray hazy film. Such were the chairs, sofas, divans, in their rich brocades, and the soft silken hangings, the deep pile of Turkish carpet, the lovely Oriental rugs, the walls, on which hung exquisite works of art, in oil paintings, and water colors. Bertram threw himself into a chair of satin brocade, but I with my usual fondness for looking at things, inspected the pictures, which I found were all selected with the greatest care, and taste. They were mostly figures and landscapes, and bore the names of some well-known New York artists, and others who were not so well known, but their work was equally as good. None were large, and mixed here and there, were some small gems, of water colors and etchings.

The bric-a-brac, also showed taste, and the delicacy of feminine eyes, which possesses an inherent love of the beautiful, as well as color. I strayed into the library, which led off the salon, and which runs across the back of the house, taking in the hall, as nearly all the tall New York houses do. Ah, here was a room that some woman had made her own, while like the parlor, in effect of golden and silver hues, it was entirely original in its furnishing. In one corner stood a large bookcase filled with books, in the opposite corner, a piano, guitar, mandolin, a violin, and a beautiful harp. In the large windows, were cushioned rests, and standing about the polished oak floor, with its rich Oriental rugs, were easy chairs, lounges; pictures hung on the walls, and some fine pieces of statuary stood about on pedestals. A large table of carved antique oak stood in the center, covered with a creamy satin cloth, upon it were papers,

new books, stationary, gold pens, and gold and silver inkstands. I picked up one of the silver inkstands to examine it, as it appeared to be a curious and artistic piece of workmanship, and to my surprise I saw engraved upon it the crest and monogram of the Countess Palermo.

And so it was on the lamps, trays of silver, holding the Venetian cut glasses, the beautiful ware that filled the cabinets, of carved wood, which stood in the corners, and panels of the wall. I then turned to the mantelpiece of carved Italian marble, done by an Italian, it was a work of art in itself. "What a pity," I thought, as I stood admiring it, "that the rich who build fine houses don't spend more money for this kind of work." Among the bric-a-brac, and photographs of friends, I saw a small cheap one of Eugene Lunis, taken when a boy of seventeen or eighteen, in his working dress. Yes, there he was, the strong honest face, the clear keen, blue eyes, the small but finely-shaped head. Oh, yes, I would recognize Gene anywhere. And oh, Nina, if I had doubts before of the Countess Palermo, being one and the same Nina, the adopted daughter of Mrs. Lunis, and the sister of Gene, for it seemed so much like a dream to me, I had positive proof now, that the woman I would see in a few seconds was none other than the lost Nina.

I laid the photograph back in its place, returned to the salon, and was greeted by Bertram with a low amused laugh, as I threw myself into a large easy-chair near him. We were talking in a desultory way about this and that, when I caught the rustle of drapery, and the light footsteps of a woman, coming down the stairs. My heart leaped to my throat and almost choked me, the hot blood burned my cheeks and temples, and for a moment blinded my eyes. When I came to myself, she was just entering the salon.

"I thought," she remarked, holding out her hand to Bertram, "that you were so full of chagrin at that tiresome play last night, I would not see you again for a week." She laughed lightly. Bertram had risen, I also; when he presented me, her glance met mine, for a moment she seemed to me to give a slight start, and I saw her cheek color faintly, but whatever her thought was

she put it aside from her, and welcomed me with a dignified, yet womanly graciousness, which pleased me exceedingly. She rolled up a chair, and beckoned to us to be seated, then seated herself.

She wore a dark reddish gown of rich satin, more of the Pompeian color. Covering the bodice was black silk tulle, which came up over the low surplice waist, in indescribable puffs and ruffles, high about her white neck. The sleeves were of the black tulle, and came just to her elbow. Upon her arms and neck, were heavy bands of dead gold, the blue-white flame of a priceless stone, as large as a hazelnut, flashing here and there. A fillet of gold clasped the curls on her brow, and caught the heavy black braids back of the ear. She looked to be all drapery, and floating black gauze, as she reclined in her chair.

"Mr. Arlington spoke of you, in his note to me to-day, as a friend of his from the West. I suppose you find New York something surprising in the way of a city."

"Well yes," I answered, with a smile, "it has most pronounced characteristics of its own, so have our western cities, for that matter. But New York, being the great metropolis of the country, the New York people," (I gave her a gracious smile), think, of course, there is nothing to be seen worth seeing outside of their city."

"I hoped Beverly, by this time, had become a cosmopolite, but as often as he has been coming to and from our city, and living here for months at a time, his love for the West, is still paramount, and his westernisms still stick," said Bertram teasingly.

"Yes, like the bark on the tree, they are hidebound," I answered, laughing.

"Why I think there is no place in the world like New York," said Nina, wondering that any one should question its resources for all things pertaining to the wants, comforts, pleasures, and joys, of the genus homo. "There is everything to see here," she continued, "and we get the first of everything in the way of the table: game, poultry, fish, flowers, fruit. And for wearing apparel, we have all the first fashions, the first chance to select from the foreign and domestic fabrics. And for the in-

tellect, we have the first of the new books, plays, operas, and in art, all the new paintings, and if you want spiritual food, here in the churches, we have some of the brightest minds."

"You have Parkhurst," I said. She smiled.

"Oh, I love New York," she went on; "why I don't like to leave it long enough to go to the seashore, during the hot months; a few weeks, is all I can endure Long Branch at a time. I'm going down in a few days, for two or three weeks. About two years ago, I was obliged to go abroad for five or six months, the trip was on business, as well as pleasure. Of course I wished to see my father's country, the home of my ancestry on his side: fair, beautiful Italy, land of poetry, painting and song. I did not know but what I would make it my home. But I became wretchedly homesick, for New York. I am American born, and American reared; I could not live out of New York City. I am going to Long Branch in a few days, I should like you to come down with Mr. Arlington, some time during my stay there, and if you can't make it convenient to come to the seashore, I shall be pleased to see you at my 'At home,' then you can find the way yourself. My world, is not a large one; you will meet but a few choice spirits, they go to make up my salon. Some artists, litterateurs, one or two journalists, one or two bankers, and a mixture of the legal lights," and she looked at Bertram and smiled, tossed her head, then laughed a low laugh, as if teasing him. How charming she was; her whole manner and expression of face, told back of her proud hateur, she was the simple girl, still.

"There is but one other woman and myself," she continued, "and she is an elderly lady, a Madame Sloan, a companion who resides with me." She glanced at Bertram again, then dropped her eyes, and it seemed to me the last sentence was spoken in a tone of sadness.

For a second my eyes rested on my friend's face, it told its own story, and the story was, that the heart of the man, had gone out in all its fullness and depths of love, to the woman who was seated before him. I pitied him, from my soul, for I saw how hopeless his love was,

and I think Nina herself, pitied him, but she did not love him then. Oh, no, the heart under that white heaving bosom, had been seared and lacerated, the poisoned dagger had pierced it, and the proud noble nature of the girl, had buried itself in scorn, resentment and hate, of his kind. Only a little over twenty-four years, with wealth, marvelous beauty, a noble name and title, she was shut out from the world of her own kind, yet scorning men, and still doomed to their society, to be their snare, for few but gave her love.

In the conversation which followed, I found she had not spent the four years, which had elapsed, in idleness. I noted that her mind was well stored, her language good, and well selected, and she expresesed herself, fluently on every subject that was broached. Pictures, books, authors, artists, and musicians, and even politics, which she confessed not to bother herself much about. But art, music, and the drama, was her love, her passion.

"I would rather go to an opera, than eat," she said, when discussing the play of the evening before, "but Anna Held, while she is good in her way, is not quite the style for me. I do not admire burlesque. Let us go into the library, I like to sit there best, it's more homelike, not quite so formal as this big salon."

"I like the library better myself, and I know Beverly will be pleased to hear you sing," said Bertram, rising and following after her. I followed also, rejoiced at the move, and bowing, I seated myself in an easy-chair by the table, while Bertram who had stepped to the piano, began arranging some pieces of music, that laid upon it.

"Here is a piece from 'Hernania,' with variations, it's my lesson. I have the same arranged for the violin; it is the love scene, between Donna Sol, and Hernania. I have taken but a few lessons in it, but I think you will like it." She seated herself at the piano, and swept her fingers over the keys, softly, in sad sweet pathos, which stirred the heart, and soul, to thrill with the poetry, passion, and suffering, and tragedies, of life.

As I sat there I could not believe, but that I was still dreaming, that I was under some spell, some kind of a trance, that some one had hypnotized me, that this beau-

tiful queenly girl, in her rich trailing robes, her white jewelled fingers, manipulating the keys with masterly execution, could be Nina, the poor salesgirl, of No. — 20—F—Street. Nina, whom Gene, and myself, had searched for in the avenues and streets, where the outcasts, and courtesans, are most to be found. Nina, mistress of this great mansion, Nina, Countess Palermo, the beloved of my dear friend Bertram Arlington. Yes, she was one and the same, which proves the old adage, over and over again, that truth is stranger than fiction. That parentage plays its saving part, that the intellect when put to its God-given use, is master every time of the senses.

When she finished and the music ceased, I started up like one suddenly roused from sleep in which he was having a strange and pleasant dream. She turned to us with a smile, the large lustrous eyes, were moist, and tears glistened on the long dark lashes. But she said gaily, as she thrummed the piano-board, "Let me sing you this little ballad, I found it in an old Italian love-story. It begins thus: 'The edelweiss, blooming in the Alpine snows, so dear, my love shall bloom for you, though the snow of years, fall upon my heart.' My teacher, Professor Zone, and myself set it to music."

I thought it the sweetest, most exquisite air, I had ever heard. Bertram, who stood by her side, seemed deeply moved. When she finished she rose, and went to a small silver button in the wall, touched it, came back, and drew a chair up to the table near where Bertram was seated. The bell was soon answered, by the black butler.

"Samson, go tell Madame Sloan to come down, and I want you to prepare a tray." Samson disappeared, and in a few moments, Madame Sloan entered the library, bowed to Bertram, and was duly introduced to me. She was a tall slim woman, of forty-five or fifty years, a New Yorker, born and reared in one of the large suburban towns, which skirt the metropolis. Her father was a small store-keeper, but when she married Tom Sloan, she moved to the great city, where she saw many of the ups and downs of life. The first ten years of their mar-

riage, they lived up to the top notch of a large salary, then the salary was cut. Tom stood it good-naturedly until another cut, then he left the firm, where he had been since a boy, seventeen years old. They then began to have reverses, and the makeshifts of keeping up appearances, that curse of the American woman, who has drifted without knowing it into the pretenses, and artificialities of city life. Who loves the word, and what it means, "getting on," when she has once tasted of the flesh-pots of Egypt; she dreams of millions, she hears millions talked of on all sides of her, in her own circle, and every circle, from the richest to the poorest. New York is the home of millionaires, her neighbors grow rich, and why not Tom, or John, and she hates in her heart of hearts, anything like poverty.

The hardening process had begun years before Tom Sloan died, and Tom, before he departed this life, like many another man, passed out not leaving a penny to his widow. She was then away past her youth, and she drifted about eking out a scanty existence in a small furnished hall-room, until one morning, on looking over the columns of the *World* and *Tribune*, her eyes rested on this: "Wanted, a lady from forty to fifty years old or over, must be well-educated, of good family, and good character, to be the companion and chaperon, of a young lady. Call at No.—

Madame Sloan, who was at that time, on the brink of starvation, and perfectly incompetent to battle for subsistence, with the present younger generation, and too proud to take what she called a menial place in a family to care for children, was delighted with her prospects of a home, and above all with Nina, after her long confidential talk with Miss Palermo, the morning she called at the great mansion in West 80—S.— Street. "Yes," she said, in her proud heart, after leaving Nina's room, engaged to come that very day, "I shall really love her; she is a beautiful young woman, her father an Italian nobleman, and think of it, no family; no one in that great house but herself, and the servants. I am to take charge of the house, and her, it will be just in my line."

And had Madame Sloan been made to order, she

couldn't have fitted in Nina's household better. She was well versed in the ways of the world, clever, shrewd, intelligent, and possessed of that delightful gift, tact. She had at last found her place, what she was most fitted to do, and with all the comforts, and luxuries, of wealth, as well as its protection, and without demeaning herself. She understood thoroughly the girl's position. Nina did not deceive her, and Madame Sloan pitied her, and made up her mind to stand by her, through thick and thin, and coach her all she could in the ways of the social world. She wanted Nina to make a grand *coup d'etat*, for social place, and she would back her.

In the old days of prosperity, she herself was on the footing of social intimacy, with people who were now cutting a high figure in New York's upper ten. These people were not so rich then, but were good, well-to-do people, bourgeoisie. But the girl was too proud. "I could not stoop to manœuvre for the smiles and approbation of a certain set," she said, one day, to Madame Sloan, as they sat in the Countess's beautiful boudoir, discussing the matter. "No, never while such an awful skeleton is in my closet. Some day, fate may be merciful, and take the hideous grinning thing out and destroy it."

"Nina, my dear, you surely haven't let the gentlemen sit here all this time without a cool drink. I will ring for Samson."

"We have been so busy talking, that the time slipped away. Mr. Arlington should feel enough at home, to ring for Samson, and let him know he's thirsty," she said, looking towards Bertram, with a light laugh, showing the piquancy of the lovely mouth. Then she turned to me with her face still lighted up with a smile. "But I have not been very thoughtful of you; Bertram should have reminded me of my omission in hospitality to his friend."

"I will promise to do better, hereafter," he answered softly, "but I am so well acquainted with my friend Beverly's capacity for enjoyment, and extracting pleasure out of things, even the most commonplace, that I know he has been delighted ever since he entered

the house. Why Beverly would get pleasure out of a woodshed, if he were obliged to spend an evening there, or if thrown upon the desert of Sahara, he would find a thousand things to interest him. With what he loves best about him, books, paintings, music, and all that is beautiful; to want anything to feed the animal, the inner man, while there is so much to nourish the mind, would be to disturb an ideal dream. Oh, no, when you are better acquainted with my friend Beverly, you will find his resources for entertaining and amusing himself, are prodigious."

"Bravo," she cried, clapping her white hands together, her fingers laden with jewels. "And you love books, and pictures. I have been making a small collection of paintings," she said, rising.

"So I have observed," I answered, rising also.

"Yes, since I moved to this house, which is nearly three years ago, I began before but they were little etchings, and now and then a water color. I think some of these are good, although I am not much of a critic, but I have great love, and appreciation of pictures, and I judge and buy mostly from these two, at least I am governed by them," she said simply, as Bertram, and myself, followed her about, and she pointed out the different paintings. "And I didn't go to the picture dealers either, I went to the artist's studios. I wanted to help the poor artists; I know how they are treated by the dealers, I have had a little experience in finding the ins and outs of things, in that line. I learned that the dealers charged a hundred per cent., and by the time the artist pays for his frame, his oils, out of the large price the purchaser pays, precious little the poor artist gets, when we come to consider his time, his years of study, besides his talent and his genius."

It was my turn now, to cry "Bravo," and I did it lustily.

"You have struck one of the worst socialists, in New York City. Herr Most, is nowhere beside him," said Bertram, with a mischievous hilarity.

The color mounted to her cheek, she turned her eyes, brilliant and sparkling, upon me, and reached out her

hand. "Comradiers," she said, then continued, "Socialism in its best sense, runs through every vein of my body, it minglest in and is fed by my very life-blood, hot Italian blood. My grandfather on my father's side threw up his birthright, his estates, his King, because he did not keep his promise to those who put him on the throne, to make more liberal laws for the people. My father, his son, became an exile to this country, hoping to at least find a fair portion of it in this Republic. But he would shake his head and say, that every man's hand was raised against his brother man, the liberty we boasted of was the right of one set of men, to rob and cheat the other, providing they held the power, and the tyranny of combinations, for the purpose of grinding down and controlling the wants and commodities of the many, existed to such a degree in no other country, Monarchial, or Republic. The world is a great school: I have not lived my twenty-four years, without learning something," she went on with a sigh, and a melancholy ring in her voice. "And oh, it is the only pleasure I take in having a little money," and she looked towards me again, and smiled, and her large eyes, seemed to burn and emit sparks of fire. "I can turn away from the men and women, in the large establishments where I go to look at things, and for the purpose of purchasing too. They see me drive up in my carriage and livery, and they bow and grimace, while if I came on foot, and in poor clothing, they would scorn me, and turn their backs upon me. I give them to understand I will have none of it. I tell them I know an old man, who has a small shop on P—— Street, off Broadway, he makes these things beautifully, artistically, I will go there. 'Yes,' they answer, 'but you will have to pay more.' 'Oh, I know, but he will get something for his labor and skill, the profit will not all go to the middlemen, who neither toil nor spin, nor put capital into what they sell, yet receive their hundred per cent., but are the waste, in the battle of life.' Oh, yes, I have read a great deal on these subjects, I have read Lasalle, Mazzini, and Karl Marx, scientific socialism, but I don't just agree with them in everything.

“Cuba, fair southern isle of the sea, she lies right at our door, she has wasted, and spilled her best blood, fighting for a Republic, will she ever get it, and if she ever does, what then? Will she fall into the snares and pitfalls that we have? Will the ambitious, heartless, selfish, tyrannical, become dominant like in fair America? Mazzini’s dream for Italy was a Republic, liberty of the people, men to be free to choose their rulers, co-operation in labor; capital and labor, to go hand in hand, but we see what a farce we have made of it in this country. Never since the history of the world, have so many crimes been committed, by the few, under the cloak of freedom, against the toiling masses, as in this so-called free land. And they do it barefaced, knowing that the government stands behind ready to back them. And who is the government? Not the people or the ideal, Uncle Sam, would to God it were, but an old crippled man of gold, painted up and dressed in the guise of youth, this is what they show us, while three or four old men, New York and London gold brokers are really the government.

“Look at New York, we talk of freedom, was there ever a city so coerced? I speak now of the majority of those who toil and labor, those who buy and those who sell; go into any of those little shops all along the avenues, the small merchant does much complaining about the department stores, but he gives you to understand in an indifferent machine-like way, when you ask the price of a thing you wish to purchase, ‘If the price don’t suit you, you can take it or leave it,’ for he knows back of him, are the great corporations, who place the price of his wares. No matter what the article is, he gets his per cent., and you will find it no cheaper anywhere else.

“We talk, and the press writes long columns of the over-crowding of China, Japan, London, and Paris, and their immoralities, they are no worse than New York City, nor are they as bad, my soul, no. And who makes and creates these immoralities, in the large cities? The manufacturer, the big Jew, clothes-furnishing wholesale houses, the merchant princes. These ruin more young women, than any other source; the girls and women are

driven to immoral lives, by the low wages paid, and the high rate of living. Day in and day out, and weeks and months, and the months go into years, and still the hard grind of poverty is felt. They live in crowded tenement houses, packed in rooms not bigger than closets.

"And what makes it harder, these girls are Americans, educated in our public schools. They are pretty, they desire comfortable living, they have a passion for pretty things, for fine dress. Many of them are weak, and vain, the tempters come, and they fall, and more often the tempter is the man, who can stop their week's salary, and have them discharged. Oh, yes, I know whereof I speak." She bowed her head, and her eyes swept her own rich apparel, the trailing satins, the black floating gauze, the white arms, with their circlets of heavy bands of dead gold, the white jewelled hands, with their gleaming flashing gems, and her beautiful throat, rising above the black, like a graceful swan's.

"Oh, I wish it were all different," she cried, rising from her chair, and wringing her hands. "Reform coming from such as me would have no effect on the people, they demand the life that can influence and lead them to better things, must be clean and pure from the start, it must have something of the Christ, in it, or else they will not follow where they cannot trust. I parted with the religion taught me in childhood: it was my father's, my mother's, my adopted mother's. The night I took that fatal step, I battled for hours with the blessed Christ, and the woman in me. I flung them away for revenge, but the brand was already on my brow," and she drew her hand across it. "I must carry it now to my grave, and nothing but the grave can hide it."

"Nina, Nina," I cried, jumping to my feet. I stood before her with bowed head. "Oh, pardon me," for I saw her tremble, and the blood mount hot to her cheek, and temples. "Countess Palermo," I said, correcting myself, "you are wrong in condemning yourself thus; because we make one great mistake in our youth, there is no reason why we should allow it to stand as a hindrance to the pursuit of things purer, and nobler, deeds which enrich and enlarge the mind and soul, and step

by step, leads to the broader and higher life, which is the life of achievement. To make others happy is to be happy ourselves." While I spoke, she seemed deeply moved, and upon her face rested that shade of sadness, which I had observed during the evening, transient in its passing over her features, like the shadow of a dark cloud, floating by.

"Yes, what you say, is good, and true, and I thank you for it, but—" here her whole manner changed, and she shook her finger at me with a merry laugh. "Here comes Samson, with the tray, let us see what good things he has brought us. I know you and Bertram must be tired, and thirsty, and need some refreshments."

Samson, deposited his tray on a side stand, drew out a handsome mahogany table which stood in one corner, with a Japanese lacquer tray filled with goblets, of cut glass, opened out the leaves, and spread over it a white linen damask cloth, and laid plates of the finest china, and napkins of the damask like the cloth, a Venetian glass bowl of crushed ice, goblets half filled with the crushed ice. Decanters of Venetian glass filled with different kinds of wine, also a large pitcher of ice cool lemonade, a pitcher of claret sangaree. Samson filled two glasses with the claret sangaree, and passed one to Bertram, and one to myself. He then filled Nina's and Madame Sloan's with lemonade. We had two or three kinds of cake, and some delicious salad made of lettuce, chicken, and potato. One of Sam's decoctions.

And we all sat around the table and laughed and chatted; Nina was particularly gay after her serious talk; at times she became brilliant and witty, and Bertram who had quite a reputation for repartee, knew Nina to be his equal in that art, and he seemed to enjoy it. I found Madame Sloan very entertaining, and perfectly at her ease. She had all the sang-froid of a well-bred woman of the world, and looked every inch a lady in her long, black dress trailing the floor, and setting off her slim, elegant figure. Her slender white hands, her pale delicate features showing the traces of former beauty. She looked at life something in the way of a passing show, and while the show went on its way to get all the

amusement and happiness out of it possible. She saw all the incongruities of the show, but she cared more for its humorous side. She was quite witty in her way. "Oh, I like to be comfortable," she remarked, smiling, and her blue eyes twinkled, as she sipped her lemonade. "I have much of the feline nature in me; I have all its sensuousness, and enjoy the soft side of things."

I observed that Nina treated her with marked attention and kindness. Samson had just brought in some dishes of ice cream, and orange ice, when I heard the front door open and shut with a slam. Samson left the library to go to the hall, and I observed a shade of pallor passing over Nina's face; then she became particularly gay, and her laugh rang out in musical swells at some remark of Bertram's. In a few seconds after I heard the front door close with such a loud bang, there entered the library a man, and to my amazement and horror, Roscoe Delano stood before me.

"Ah," he said with a sneer, standing opposite Nina, and leaning his shoulder against the bookcase, "always company, always new victims. You see gentlemen, I have to keep an eye on my ward; my ward in chancery, ha, ha!" His laugh was forced, and his whole manner was coarse and insolent. He stepped forward a pace or two and threw himself into a chair beside Madame Sloan.

He was clad in ecru linen-crash pants, coat, and vest, which had that summer become quite the vogue, and popular with men of a tendency to flesh, and his shoes were of tan. He looked ten years older than when I last saw him, the floridity of his face had paled, the red sensual lips were drawn down at the corners, the prominent eyes had a hard sinister fierce expression. He looked like a man that was crazed with an unrequited passion, consumed by a mad jealousy which was burning up his heart and his vitals. I could think of nothing as I watched him but a bulldog that had put his head in his collar chain, and was forever trying to break away from his shackles, but the more he leaped, and pawed, and plowed the ground about him, the tighter he wound his chain around his neck. From the

moment he entered the library, Nina was like some one transformed; she threw down her spoon and the dish of cream she was sipping on the table, and sat up in her chair, her head proudly poised, her bosom heaving, and drawing the dainty lace thing she called a handkerchief, nervously through her fingers. Her cheeks were crimson, and the upper arched lip, which was one of her many charms, was drawn down and ugly in its expression of scorn, contempt, and disgust. And in her eyes was a cold steel-like glitter, which seemed to emit sparks of white flame as she turned her head, and swept his face with a quick glance.

"I wonder," she said, bending forward and picking up her spoon, and beating lightly the edge of the china dish of cream she had just laid down, "which of us in this room is the greatest victim of circumstances, the greatest sufferer, that is according to the years they have lived. I am the youngest, Madame Sloan, and Mr. Delano the oldest."

There was silence for some minutes. Samson who had gone out with the china bowl, came back with it filled with ice, which he placed before Delano, also the decanters of wine; then he half filled a glass with the crushed ice, and set it beside him. "Didn't hear that last remark of Miss Palermo's," said Delano, filling his glass from one of the decanters.

"The Countess wonders," replied Bertram, and he repeated what Nina said.

"By George!" exclaimed Delano, drinking his wine with one swallow, then rising from his seat he began walking up and down with a blustering stride to the farthest end of the room, and back again. "Ha, ha, gentlemen, the most beautiful woman in New York, but twenty-three or four years old, and mistress of an establishment like this. Look around you gentlemen, look around you! why the Astors, and the Vanderbilts can't boast of a finer house than this, and with any amount of lovers at her feet to boot. By George, gentlemen, if you but knew, I am the victim." And he hurried his steps back and forth; I glanced toward him, his face was deadly pale, and the blue of his eyes was white with

anger and jealous rage, as if he would like to slay her where she was seated.

"Yes," he went on, his eyes glaring at her, but she kept her head turned away from him, "I am forty-six years old. I have had my day; I have always had my own way, pretty much before; women were no more to me than the glass of wine I have just tossed off, simply for the pleasure of an hour. Of course I have had my likes and fancies, but she, this tragedy queen here, ha! ha! by George, I'm the dupe! I'm the victim now."

"I will have no more of this," said Nina, imperiously, rising from her seat, her whole body quivering, the fire in her eyes scorching the long lashes, and drying the tears which glistened upon him. "You are the victim of your own game, the game you have been playing all your life, you have made victims of poor women by the scores. Now the tables have turned, it is but just but the inevitable law of things. I did not choose or appoint myself the avenger of your acts. I was chosen by an unseen and higher power. But enough, I will have no more of this; if you can't come here and act the gentleman, and behave like other guests, I will find a way to make you, or stop your visits." Her voice rang out clear and decisive, and he seemed to cow under the burning, flashing fire of her eyes, and stood as if rooted to the floor. "Samson, attend to Mr. Delano," she said more softly, as he threw himself into a chair, and she resumed hers. "Mrs. Sloan, ask him if there is anything he would like. Mr. Arlington, perhaps yourself and Mr. Osgood would enjoy a game at cards; Mr. Delano is very fond of cards."

"It is quite late, some other evening we will be glad to play," said Bertram, rising. I rose also.

"Excuse me Arlington, I beg your pardon gentlemen. You see I have to keep a guardian's eye on my ward, ha, ha,—my ward in chancery, ha, ha. Come again Arlington, ah, what is the name," he said, glowering at me. "Osgood," replied Mrs. Sloan. "Mr. Osgood come again. I don't want you to think I wish to coerce my ward, no by George, she can fill the whole house with her lovers; come again Osgood; Arlington I know don't

need pressing. Come again gentlemen, any time you feel like it. You don't mind me speaking for the Countess, ha, ha."

In a few minutes Nina stood in the door of the salon bidding us good-night; her face was as white as when I saw it the evening before at the theatre. She held out her hand to me, and as I took it in mine, my heart cried in silence, "Nina, Nina, I saw your humiliation tonight; that brute Delano is the skeleton in the closet of your great house. I turned quickly from her, fearing that something about me might recall to her mind her mother's lodger of four summers before, and opened the door and went out. Bertram lingered a moment with her hand in his as I stood in the vestibule. I saw him, through the door which I had left ajar, bend low and press his lips upon it. Then take his cane and hat from the hall-tree, and in a few seconds we were in the street.

CHAPTER V.

HE WILL BLESS YOU THEN AS HE FOLDS YOU TO HIS BREAST.

Neither Bertram nor myself, spoke until we reached the steps of the Quinton house. "Come in," I said, "I would like you to stay all night with me now that you are here."

"I shall be glad to," he answered, "the thought just occurred to me as I came up the steps, I have something to say to you Beverly, and I don't know of a better time."

"Well, old fellow, if you were old Quinton's heir, you couldn't have finer quarters," remarked Bertram, taking a survey, after I had lighted the gas, of my spacious surroundings, with the dainty blue silk hangings, white

muslin curtains, its white and gold paneling, its walls of gray decorated in blue violets, and its furniture, oak and willow.

"This room was intended for a woman, no one could furnish it up with all this drapery for a man, shutting out the pure fresh air. I feel like sneezing every time I enter the door."

"What a queer fellow, you are Beverly," said Bertram, with a laugh.

"Oh, no, when you come to knock round the world as much as I have in the last three years, and have to make your bread, by few scanty brains, and mighty scanty at that, you will not want silken hangings in your workshop. They are womanish things any way."

"And we like them all the better, for their love of all these pretty soft things," answered Bertram, as he placed his cane in a corner, and laid his hat, on a little stand, which stood near by.

"You're right, my dear fellow, there is no music sweeter to my ear than the light footstep of a woman, the rustle of her skirts, and the shrough of her drapery. It is a delightful sensation, and makes the blood tingle in my veins."

Bertram, peeled of his coat, for the night was warm, to sultriness, and drew up a willow armchair, to one of the large open windows which looked out on a long and wide areaway, inclosed by the backs of the great tall houses, on both side streets, and threw himself into it.

"We will have to take things slim, Bertram, as I am not provided with anything but cigars. Yes, I see old Michael has left me a big pitcher of ice water."

I handed Bertram my cigar-case, and matches, took off my coat, lit a cigar, turned the gas down to a faint blue point, drew up a chair to the other window, and seated myself, my friend's vis-a-vis. We sat some moments without speaking puffing the smoke from our cigars.

"What a nightmare that Delano is," said Bertram, breaking the silence.

"Yes, it seems impossible to me that their lives, should be in any way connected. What I told you

about seeing Nina, enter that house, at midnight, four years past this summer, and the door close on her, what happened after, how they came together, how she ever emerged from there to her present place, I cannot conjecture. But this I could take my oath on, that whatever their relations may have been, nothing exists of it now. The step she took was done for revenge upon the man, who had branded her with a lie to the world, while in her own heart, she knew she was innocent, and pure."

"Infamous scoundrel," cried Bertram, rising from his chair, and beginning to pace the floor. "I could have struck him to-night, with as little compunction, as I blow the smoke of this cigar from my lips. I do not only believe it but I know since my acquaintance with her, there has been nothing between them, they are strangers to each other. So far as *l'union libre*, it was more on her side, a union of hate. He comes there every night, just as you saw him, this evening, it makes no difference who is there, stranger or friend, or how many, it is the same thing ; she has to undergo the same humiliation. Why she bears with him, I can't understand, she needn't, Beverly, put up with him a moment."

"My dear boy, you are better acquainted with her affairs, than I. As I told you, I know nothing of her life, for the last four years."

"Yes, I'm her man of business, have been for nearly three years past. But I'm now going to relate to you something, Beverly, which I compelled her to tell me one evening about a year, after we first met. Before I go farther I must confess even at the risk of your condemnation, your resentment, and thinking me a base unprincipled fellow, simply blinded by a passion, well it may be the animal, the beast, in me, whatever it is, I love Nina Palermo. Yes I have loved her ever since I set eyes on her. I don't mean to say, Beverly, that had I never met her again, that it would have taken such a hold upon me, but I love her with a love I have never known before, the love of the mature man, the love of my life. I know Beverly where your thoughts have traveled," (for I sat with my face, turned looking out of the

window, and he must have read what was passing through my mind).

“ To a cottage, near the sea, where dwells one of the loveliest, sweetest, purest, and fairest of the daughters, of men ; the soft-eyed Clarise. That I owe her my faith, and allegiance, I own. I am not pledged to her, but it was my intention to marry her, before I met Nina Palermo, and I think she understood it that way, and loved me. Our courtship goes away back, to boy and girl, and will meet with the same fate, as most boy and girl courtships do. To marry Clarise now would only be to destroy her happiness, to make her the most miserable of women, as well as myself, the most wretched of men.

“ I will not state to you what my impressions were of Nina, the day she first came to my office with Delano. If she were his mistress she was a very rare specimen of that kind of girl. I would try by all the power in me to win her from him. I knew she despised him, for her whole manner towards him, showed it. I was a younger man, better looking, better educated, he was a parvenu, I a gentleman, of family and position, and had more wealth at my command than he. These were all in my favor, I knew they would not be lost on the kind of girl, I supposed Nina to be. Besides I loved her for herself, and was determined to gain her favor.

“ In all that first year, when laboring under painful doubts and fears and I will confess jealousies, I never saw by look, word, or deed, her do or say, anything contrary to the most refined and virtuous woman. Delano, came more frequently and earlier, than he does now, but she always treated him with proud scorn and freezing contempt. At last driven to desperation, by the love I bore her, for it had taken a deeper and stronger hold upon me, I felt I must have her at any cost and get her out of Delano’s power.

“ On the night I speak of, we were alone in the library, she was dressed in white. I like her better in white, than in color. She was seated in one of those large easy chairs, the silvery sheen of the satin damask, throwing out her dark head, which reclined against its back.

From where I myself was seated, I had a three-quarter view of her face. Her beautiful eyes, deep as wells, and as mysterious as stars, were gazing off, as if living over some scene, in the simple home of her girlhood. And over her features was that shade of sadness, which her past suffering has something to do with, as well as being peculiar to the Italian race. Unable to bear it any longer I rose and fell on my knees beside her, and taking her two hands, in mine, I held them tight, for she started up frightened, and tried to draw them away.

“ ‘ I love you, Nina, I love you, with all my heart and soul.’

“ ‘ O, don’t say it, please don’t insult me,’ she cried, wrenching her hands from mine. ‘ I thought you above anything like this, that you were too manly, that you had eyes to see, and would have some pity, for me, and not offer me love, this hateful passion that men call love. Can a woman, never be anything higher to a man, than the object of a low base passion ; is he capable of no pure and disinterested friendship for a woman, never able to rise to the heights of being happy, simply in a woman’s companionship. I begin to believe no man can.’

“ ‘ It is not merely passion, that I offer you,’ I said, taking both her hands again, in mine, ‘ but love, Nina, pure and simple love, the love of the mature man, love in all its strength, depths, and heights, which I am capable of feeling, the love of my life. When I first met you my intention was to marry one of the fairest and gentlest of girls, trained and educated, from childhood by her father, a man, of the highest attainments, and one of the first scholars in our country. Besides this she was accomplished in both music and art. We were boy and girl together, she is and has been from her childhood, the loved companion of my favorite sister. There is no engagement, but we liked each other. But from the day I first saw you, my love for Clarise, has paled, and faded, and finally died in the greater love for you. Now tell me I beg of you, before I go farther, what your relationship to this man Delano is, who I know you have the most painful aversion to, against whom your whole nature and

womnnhood revolts ; and how you ever came to fall into his hands ? A girl, like you don't throw herself away, simply for money, and the sensual pleasures of the world, you are not of that stripe.'

" ' Let go my hands,' she said, drooping her eyes, ' and I will tell you enough, so that you will understand my position, and it may be the winding-sheet in which you will bury the love, you have just now confessed to, God grant it may.'

" She threw herself back into the chair, she had been sitting in, I drew mine close to hers. ' I am not,' she began, looking away from me, ' the first or the fiftieth girl, victim of Delano's machinations; suffice it to say, that in the store where I was employed, as saleswoman, and Delano manager, I accepted an invitation from him, I will for short say to dinner. On our return home, I declined another invitation. I was the next morning summoned to the general manager's office, to answer to the charge of immorality. I will not now relate what my horror, my consternation was when called to that office to see Delano, and Waite, the head manager of the whole house, sitting there as my judges. What I felt, what I suffered, would be cruel to myself, to recall, for four years, I have tried to put it from me, and live it down. But if you have a mother or a sister, or the sweet Clarise, you have just spoken of, you can imagine yourself, how shocked and outraged their sensibilities would be.'

" ' I knew my innocence would not save me, that very soon the word would get out, and it did so as soon as I left my place behind my counter, and I was as much condemned as if I had been guilty a thousand times over. Well I was carried from that room, in a dead swoon, to one of the private rooms, set apart for the girl employees, in case of sudden illness. Two or three hours later I recovered, sufficient to sit up, and a few hours later, I left the store, stealing out unseen by a side stairway.

" ' I never returned to my home. I knew Delano's infatuation for me. I made up my mind, that though I should go down to hell, I would make him pay the penalty of his deed. That I would avenge not only my own

wrong, but all the other poor girls, he had made the victims, of his lust. Midnight found me standing before the very house, I had refused to enter the night before with him. I knew Delano would be there, at least he would come there, to find out how his plan had worked; he had tried similar plots before. I will not go over, what it cost me to enter the door, of that house, only this it struck the youth, out of me, and made me old, oh, so old. While in every innocent girl, there is an instinctive and awful dread to do wrong, yet this very innocence, cannot conceive of the destructive and ruinous step, she is about to take.

“ The woman of the house, ushered me into an elegantly furnished room, where I had not long to wait for Delano. I had thrown off my small mantle and hat, and stood by the window. It was a front room, but the inside shutters of the windows, were closed and the light silken drapery, perfectly concealed every shade of movement. But I knew that in New York, there is the strictest police surveillance, not so much for the protection of the innocent, but for the chance of extorting money, from the unfortunate proprietress, and the inmates. All I had to do was to pull the drapery aside, wrench open the shutters, and call the police, but that was not my purpose. When Delano entered he rushed over to where I stood, and threw himself, on his knees at my feet, begging my forgiveness, saying something about that “ all is fair, in love, as well as war.” Fortunate for him, if at that moment I had had a knife or a dagger, in my hand, I would have stabbed him, to the heart, there and then.

“ But I stood like a statue, oh, I had grown so old, it seemed to me then I had lived a hundred years, and had a whole world of experience thrust upon me in a few hours. When Delano subsided from the silly stuff he talked, I then and there, made my terms, if he agreed to them I would call the landlady, and ask her to fetch pen, paper, and ink. Delano remarked, “ she would think it a strange supper.” But he was so insanely bent upon securing his prey, that in less than twenty minutes, I held in my hand, a check for a large sum of money,

drawn on one of the principal banks of New York City, and made payable to my order. I told him, that when I had drawn the money, from the bank, and placed it in another to my own credit, which I could do on the following day, I would be his, and he agreed to it, depending on my word, and left me.

“ ‘ Do not think me mercenary, in the awful step I was about to take it was my only alternative from a worse fate. In the nineteen or twenty years of my life, and in the last ten years of it, I had seen many young girls, carried away, from their poor homes, by just such men, as Delano, and in three months’ time they were driven to the streets. They would not go back to their homes, they could find no employment, besides the poison had gotten into their young blood, and opiated all the moral in them, for that life has its hasheesh, as well as the love of silver and gold, when it enters men’s souls and deadens all that is best and healthy in human nature.

“ ‘ Delano came the next evening, I kept my compact with him, but it was only once, only once, I sinned, oh, God pity me !’ she rose from her chair, raised her arms above her head, and wrung her hands. ‘ Oh, God be merciful to me a sinner, as thou didst forgive Mary Magdalene, I pray thee dear Lord Christ, forgive me,’ she walked to the window and back, drew her fingers across her brow, that beautiful brow of hers, and seated herself again. ‘ A few days after,’ she continued, a pause of several minutes ensuing, ‘ I rented a small pretty flat, uptown, furnished it and went there to live. I wished to hide myself away, so that my mother, and brother could find no trace of me.

“ ‘ Delano, followed me there, he came every evening, he insisted upon paying my bills, which I allowed him, to do, for a while. He did everything to win me and get me to live with him, but I was obdurate, I was like stone, I hated and loathed him. He would say, with an oath, that he would win me if it took him, all his life and no other man should have me. He bought me handsome presents, but I would not accept them, he offered me large sums of money, but I refused, he would then send me checks, on banks, through the mail, but I

returned them, no I took only what I bargained for, I paid it at what cost to myself, God and His angels knew.

“ ‘ After he became one of the proprietors of the large establishment he was manager of, he bought this row of houses, and deeded me this one, thinking he would at last overcome all my scruples. A few months later I moved here. I then thought of the papers my adopted mother gave me. I had them on my person, when I left the store that afternoon. I had laid them carefully away in a small box I kept for such things, and thought now was the time to have them read. I had no idea they were so important, indeed the only value they had for me, was the certificate of my mother’s marriage, my baptism, and my father’s name and title, so I brought them to you.

“ ‘ In the meantime I heard that Delano was married, and had a wife, and two children. One evening when he came I told him, what I had heard. The revenge which had taken such a hold upon me and the passionate desire to destroy him, for the wrong he had done me, had softened and lost much of its sting. I begged him to leave me, and go back to his wife and family, and that I would buy the house from him. But to show the baseness of the man and his moral degradation, he said he had offered to settle half of all he owned, as well as half of his income, upon his wife, son and daughter, if she would sue for a divorce, she could get one for she had heard of me, and if she would sue for a divorce, he would marry me. “ Never, never,” I cried, “ I have sinned enough, never will I allow you or your wife, to drag my name through the courts, it is a good, and honorable name, you have smirched it enough now. I will return you the deed to this house, pay you back all the money you gave me, I have my own income now, go back, go back, to your wife, and family, leave me I beg of you, leave me in peace.”

“ ‘ “ I cannot go back,” he answered, “ she has heard of you, and we parted for good, nearly a year ago.”

“ ‘ Now Bertram Arlington, I have told you all this, to show you what my position is, you see how inexorable

fate has dealt with me. I took that awful step, no matter what the excuse, so that I might destroy another, but I put the chain about my own neck, I forged its links, with my own hands, not knowingly, but death, or some stronger arm, must break it.'

" 'Nina, Nina,' I cried falling on my knees before her again, 'the law can break it, be my wife, and it will end all. This wretch Delano, has no claim on you, just the reverse, he will not dare to open his mouth, or breathe a word against you. He persecutes and humiliates you now, because you are alone and unprotected. You must give him back all his presents, all he ever gave you. We can be married quietly and go abroad. I have some business in Paris to transact for father, it will take me nearly a year. When we return I will buy a house in the country. I have one now in view, about three miles from Anlace, it is a lovely spot. I love you, Nina, Countess Palermo, I love you, and offer you the highest gift a man can offer a woman, his heart, his hand, and his name.'

" She was deadly pale, she pressed her fingers upon her temples, then drew them across her brow (a habit with her, when sorely agitated), leaned her head against the back of the chair a moment, as if for rest, then rose up and flung her arms above her shoulders, and clasped her hands. ' Your wife, your wife,' she repeated, as if in sobs, ' Bertram Arlington, you are mad, you do not know what you are asking, you cannot realize what your act would cost you, it would be to throw your whole life away. Oh, no no, never. I never can, or will be any man's wife. I would do you and myself a great injury. If you love me as you say you do, I beseech you to put it out of your heart, do not for a moment harbor any thought of me. I pray you go back, to that sweet girl you loved before you saw me, she is more fitted to be your wife, than I, she will make you more happy. Perhaps not now but some day in the years to come you will bless me for this.'

" I had risen from my knees, and crossed over to where she stood. I took her two hands in mine; ' I do love you Nina, I love you. If you refuse to be my wife

I can only hope and wait. I cannot go back to Clarise, God forgive me, no, not while you live.'

" ' Let us be friends,' she replied, ' let us go on as before. I like you for your culture, polish, manliness, and elegant manners, indeed for the whole gentleman that you are. You are the only young man, who comes here that I have any particularly kindly feeling or friendship for, and I do believe now, you have some real honest affection, for me.'

" We parted that night, nearly two years ago, and things have been going on just as you have seen them this evening. I visit her about twice a week, some times business takes me oftener. I have made several investments for her, which have turned out well, she has quite a modest fortune, that yields her a good income yearly, besides what she receives from her father's estate. Now Beverly this is the sequel to what happened the night, four years before, when you saw the door of that dark house close upon her, and my story, and my romance, began about a year and a half later, so like other men, and women, I try to content myself with my fate !" He stopped pacing the floor, came and threw himself into his chair.

" My dear Bertram," I said rising, after a silence of nearly ten minutes, " while I deeply regret the course things have taken, and while we cannot always be masters of our fate, yet we are more or less the makers of our own lives, and happiness. You are no boy, you are nearly thirty years old, you should know best where honor and duty lead."

" Oh, bother, Beverly, don't sermonize, in a case like this. Do men think of honor, and duty, when it comes to a great love, and passion, for a beautiful woman, and they are free to bestow it. Bah, honor, and duty," he repeated with contempt. " I'm not married to Clarise, no, not even engaged."

" You're right, my dear fellow, that's what plays the deuce, as your sister Jeanette said, ' men are such strange animals.' "

" I love Nina, and expect to go on loving her, and take the consequences," he answered with some pique.

"My dear boy, a man's love, like his religion, is a personal affair, and should be respected, however we differ in our views regarding it. Say, old fellow, it's late and I know you're dry, supposing I slip out and get a little something, I see there is still some ice in the pitcher."

I put on my hat (a man, will always put on his hat first when he's in a hurry), slipped on my coat, opened the door softly, and went down the stairs, three steps at a time, my foot falling noiselessly on thick padded carpet. I opened the front door, and turned my latch-key in it so as to close it without a sound, and hurried to the avenue, to my French restaurateur, and asked him for a bottle of his best French claret, a half-dozen lemons, I had sugar, and hastened back.

"What a first-class sneak thief, you'd make Beverly," said Bertram stifling a big laugh, as I closed the door of my room.

"Yes, I thought every step I took, old Michael would be after me with a shot gun, but come to think of it, you don't use that weapon in cultured New York."

"Oh, we have them in the country."

I took off my coat and hat, threw them on the sofa, hustled about on tiptoe, squeezed a lemon into each glass, fished up with a spoon, several small pieces of ice, from the pitcher, poured in my claret, sliced the rind of a lemon, to flavor, passed the sugar bowl to Bertram, and sweetened mine to taste, and we had a drink fit for her Majesty, of England. Bertram who is a connoisseur in such things, said Samson, Nina's butler, who is an expert in preparing drinks, couldn't equal it. Whether it was flattery or not he seemed to enjoy it immensely.

A few minntes later, we had turned in, for it was after twelve. In less than ten seconds Bertram poor fellow, had forgotten all his troubles, and lay sound asleep, at my side. But sleep, sweet sleep, was not so kind to me. "He giveth his beloved sleep," I never had reason to believe, from that, I was one of His beloved, for I had so often fervently wooed her, only to mock me. So when my head, touched my pillow, and my friend, lay at my side, breathing heavily, and healthily, lost in the

embrace of that twin brother death, my brain began to review the whole occurrence of the evening, and Bertram's relation of Nina's confession to him.

So this was Nina's life, during the four years past, the mystery was explained. Only one false step, then she quit Delano, forever ; brave girl, her whole nature revolted against such a life, with him, she had not even love for the man, to clothe its naked baseness. Poor Nina, that is why he looked as he did to-night, why he has persecuted you ever since, with a jealous mad passion, which takes the form of insanity, in some men, of the libertine order. This animality, sensuality, the more I study and philosophize upon it the more it gets beyond me. Men, have let the animal loose in them to such a degree, that the beast has become king. It is the grip of death upon the human race. Christ the Saviour of men, warned them of it, denounced it in every sentence of His teaching the whole New Testament, is a sermon against it. " My kingdom is a spiritual kingdom."

Even Bertram, swallowed up by passion, to the forgetting of his honor, to the throwing over of the fair Clarise. They were not engaged it is true, but from childhood, he had given Clarise to understand that some day, she was to be his little wife. Ah me, how deceitful is the heart of man, there is no knowing its selfishness, its utter depravity, the beast, that cuddles, nestles, sleeps, ready to spring up at the opportune moment, and assert its dominance. Clarise's fine character, gentleness, loveliness, her finished education, her artistic talent, the exquisite delicacy, of a mind, attuned to all that is beautiful, true, and good ; and above all her womanly virtues, unspotted, without blemish, looking up into one's face, with those dove-like innocent eyes. All paled and vanished before Nina's more striking, and brilliant beauty, and romantic history.

He had not even the courage, to speak to Clarise, when he learned his fate, from Nina. It was but a little over a year past, and he had made up his mind to go on loving the Countess, living in hopes of her some day, becoming his wife. Ah, yes, it is the man's usual cowardice, in

such matters, his moral apathy, his willingness to always sacrifice the woman, at any cost, and hug his own feelings, they are so delicious, why should he make any sacrifice.

He hated to break with the old professor, his old friend, and his daughter, the fair Clarise Cline. Ah, yes, the beast, is in us, the soft, cuddling, velvety, nasty thing, with the jaws of the wolf, the stealthiness of the tiger, and sensuous noiseless feline cruelty of the leopard. How my heart ached and swelled nigh to bursting with love and sorrow for Clarise, my dream of ideal womanhood. What must I do, to speak of my own love now would be coarse, and sacrilegious. I can only hope and wait. Perhaps when this passion burns itself out, Bertram will be glad to find peace and security, in the one heart that loves him, and is true. He will bless you then as he folds you to his breast, in the happiness which is his.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME LIVING PICTURES FROM THE OLD PRISON TOMBS.

It was late in the morning when Bertram and myself arose, we breakfasted at the Frenchman's, on Columbus Avenue, he enjoyed the meal immensely, better than at his own big hotel, downtown.

“Drop in soon, any day,” he said, as we parted at the door, of the restaurant. “You do not wish me to let them know at Anlace, that you are in New York; they would all be pleased to see you, especially Jeanette. Oh, by the way, Beverly, did I tell you that she had a lovely little daughter, nearly two years old, she would be delighted to present you to her.”

“And nothing would please me better, than to make the little lady's acquaintance, you are aware of my admiration for her mother.”

“It's mutual I assure you, Beverly.

"I shall not be ready to visit Anlace, or Malmarda before fall. All that day, I prowled about the bookstores, as I had gotten out of reading matter. I had always looked upon books, as something sacred, things to be treated with reverence. At home in my uncle's library, they were kept in handsome bookcases, under lock and key. I don't mean to say, they were not read, but the key was turned on them, for my uncle and myself were very jealous of our books.

I stopped at one of the regular bookstores, and bought Lew Wallace's "Prince of India," went to my room, and read, until eight in the evening, then went to dinner. After dinner I strolled about the streets for a while, then returned to my room, threw my hat on the table, peeled off my coat, put on my slippers, turned the gas low, and laid down on the sofa, for I felt very tired. I soon fell into a sound sleep, and never woke until daylight, when I rose undressed and went to bed. I kept this up for nearly four days, feeling that I needed the rest, also a good read, which I enjoyed in the "Prince of India." On the evening of the fifth day, I stood at the hall door of Gene's apartments. I had written him a postal, stating I would call that evening early, and to be ready for a long stroll. Mrs. Lunis, who opened the door, was delighted to see me again, and after a chat of a few minutes, in the little parlor, Gene came in. I looked at my watch, as we left the house, and its hands just touched a quarter of eight.

I will first state here, that it was my intention not to let Gene know until later my discovery of Nina's whereabouts. It was now nearly the end of August, although, the weather was hot during the day, the evenings were deliciously cool. A bracing sea breeze had sprung up after the sun dipped its beams for the last time, below the horizon. As we walked along, the mantel of night touched the edge of the long northern twilight, and was about to wrap it in its folds. Above the sky spread out over the city, in a deep purplish-blue, crested with stars, that shone in clear cold brilliance, like diamonds throwing out flames of white light. How high the heavens seemed here, so grand in their sweep, from horizon to

horizon. So unlike our southwest, where they droop low, and are soft, kindly, and seemingly so near.

"I am going to be pilot to-night," said Gene, when we came to Third Avenue, where the people were now swarming the streets, coming and going in streams. Gene, was dressed in his best, he wore light gray pants and vest, a black round coat, made of some light cloth, tan shoes, a straw hat, and his linen was exquisitely laundried.

What a handsome fellow I thought him, as he walked by my side, naturally fair, and having the pallor of the city, by indoor work, still he had all its ruggedness and strength also, combined with a certain picturesqueness. "We will take Third Avenue, until we come to Twenty-third Street, walk west on Twenty-third, to Sixth Avenue, up Sixth Avenue to Twenty-third Street then cross over to Seventh Avenue, down Seventh Avenue to Twelfth Street, then back again to Fourteenth Street, east on Fourteenth to Sixth Avenue. When we make this round we will then make up our minds what to do next, we are out you know for the night.

"The young men, and women, that you meet here on Third Avenue, and old and middle-aged for that matter," continued Gene, "are nearly all of the decent poor working people. Of course there is a mixture, of the other kind, and you will not go far until you find it out, your appearance will invite it."

"How about yours?" I said, laughing.

"They will know that I am a working man, and will not have the money which your appearance suggests. Women are keen judges of men, and the size of their pocketbooks. Let us take the outside of the street."

The crowd increased, a medley of human beings, brought together from the farthest ends of this little round planet, a commingling of all nations, of all types, of men, and women, of the working, hurrying, burrying, buying, selling and trafficking, world. As Thackeray said, once on going of a midsummer evening to Vauxhall, "All London was out of town, yet there was nearly a million and a half of people in the vicinity of that famous garden. Here were the thousands and hundreds

of thousands, upon the streets, of New York City, of men, women, and children, the human ants, that spin, weave, toil, and slave, and make it possible for what we call the world of society, which is but one-fiftieth of the great multitude. "The silent multitude," Zola terms them, to enjoy their country palaces, and the cool sea breezes."

We now reached Twenty-third Street; it was ablaze with light from the electric lamps above our heads, and the shop windows, and vaudeville theatres. Here was another crowd pushing, jostling, elbowing, but this crowd was of a different grade, a mixture of all classes; saleswomen, clerks, bookkeepers, women cashiers, modistes, milliners, all with a forward, smart-cut, business-like air, and dressed like millionaires' daughters. Actors, and pretty actresses, with their well-known type of fast eccentricities in dress and manners; old women, sixty and seventy, clad in mauve silk with black thread-lace mantles or scarfs of priceless value thrown over their shoulders, the rouge thick on their old wrinkled faces, their poor, old, spectacled eyes leering out from under blond wigs as if holding on to the gaities of the world with a deathlike clutch.

Handsome women from thirty-five to forty, and on up to fifty, nearly all having that cold, bold, hard expression; as if the heart was a stranger to all sympathy, delicacy, sisterly love, and feeling for one's own kind, but all the passions sharpened, and made keen by luxury and sensual gratification. On the crowd passed in the shrough of summery skirts, the rustle of airy silks which exhaled perfume; the dip and swip of feathers on large hats that shaded bold bright eyes, the bend and swaying of fans, the patter of many feet.

Tall, straight young men, keen-eyed, delicate faced, sharp features, pointed mustaches, and dressed in the height of fashion, ogling the girls as they pass by with glances that were amorous, but bereft of admiration whichmingles with it respect. Men of thirty to thirty-five, forty-five, and fifty years, and on up. Well fed, well groomed, well watered and corpulent; their once fine features, coarsened and bloated, having puffy noses,

and flabby cheeks. If they saw a woman in the crowd who happened to please their fancy, they would meet her glance with a long, glaring stare, that had the cold glittering lasciviousness of the cat, when prowling about on his nocturnal perambulations, the cruel ferocity of the wolf, when lusting for his prey.

No woman I am sure objects to an admiring glance from a man when mingled with respect, indeed she rather challenges it.

The men and women we met on this street, like Third Avenue, were from all nations and climes. The low of stature, round fat prosperous Jew, who loves the flesh-pots of Egypt; the tall, fair portly Englishman, the Russian, and German, the dapper Frenchman, and the little dark Spaniard, the big broadshouldered Irishman, and his more refined brother, the Irish-American. The thin keen-eyed, sharp-featured, sallow-faced, quick of step, money-scenting native American. And the dark eyed, sad-faced passionate Italian.

When we turned the corner of Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue, Gene laid his hand on my arm.

"Mr. Osgood, you have been in a brown study ever since we left Third Avenue, is it the people that have so interested you, that you couldn't speak a word to a fellow."

"Why bless your heart Gene, of course it is the people, the handsome men and women I have been so busy making mental notes of. Why didn't you speak to me, say anything you want to. You didn't tell me what place, or station in life these men and women occupy."

"They don't belong to the four hundred, they are all in the country, and with them the four or more thousand that hang onto the skirts of the four hundred, and the fifty or more thousand, which circle round the outer edge of the four thousand. The people we have jostled against belong to the four hundred thousand, mixture of all trades, and professions, including the fast, sporting fraternity," answered Gene.

"And we will add the other four hundred thousand of the working canaille, and we will have what goes to make up the great city in a lump," I replied.

"Here we are," said Gene, when we came to a stop at Thirty-third Street opposite the Herald building. "We will walk west to Seventh Avenue; along here is where the theatrical people hold forth. Here is the actors' association, that white building across the street, also the club house, and café, and all along here are their hotels and boarding houses. Ah, here we are on Seventh Avenue. Now Mr. Osgood, you'll get lots of plums here. The failures of life are to be found by the hundreds loitering about the saloons and club-houses on this street, and the Rains law is in full blast," and Gene laughed, a big hearty laugh. "We must take a walk here some Sunday evening, and if you want to see a greater exhibition of beer glasses than you ever saw in your life before, and the small piece of bread beside the glass for an excuse. If he had left the sandwich and hotel out of his bill, it might have done some good."

Here, like Third Avenue, were the Jew shops, second-hand clothing from the hat down to the shoe, tin shops, small drygood stores, groceries, and the saloon in all its glory and brilliance of plate glass, brass chandeliers, and electric lights. Never in all my years of young manhood did I see such a display of saloons. Some were really palaces of vulgar grandeur, their flaming lights a beacon to gather men like the flies, which swarm and circle around the electric lamps that hang high in the air, these palaces, drew the poor human flies. Men came and went, men of all types, of all nations, shades and conditions. As Gene said, broken-down men, the failures in the battle of life; men who had lost their grip in the fray, who were shattered by some predominating weakness; men from forty-five to fifty years, who were well reared, well educated, with still some hold on the world. Their handsome faces seamed and seared with dissipation, and soaked to their hearts' core with alcohol.

Men of fifty and sixty, and upward, once prominent in the money marts of the metropolis, manipulating stocks and bonds to the amount of hundreds of thousands and millions. To wake up one morning and find themselves beggars, lost all but their habits of high, luxurious liv-

ing, self-indulgence, and passion for drink; and now spend their days hiding in some poorly-furnished room, in a second-class boarding and lodging house on the avenue, to limp out at night and hang around the large saloons, the men-catchers. Men from fifty to sixty, and seventy, with shoulders stooped, limping on canes, their visages stamped with every form of vice and debauchery. The divine in them utterly blotted out by the whiskey habit; their old eyes leering, and their old hearts hard as flint, cursing life and fate, when they themselves turned the life so beautiful given them to what it is now.

So we passed on with the crowd, passed the saloon palaces, with their flash and shine, their plate glass, their brass gildings, the light from their brilliant chandeliers falling on their red draped bars, where sparkled decanters of colored Venitian glass, and nude Parian statuary. And the crowd passed to and fro, men and women, young and old, passed on, will ever pass on, until the curtain of death falls over the scene, and shuts it out forever.

"Here," said Gene, after we had gotten below Twentieth Street, "all the lodging houses have been emptied of their human ants; watch and you will see strange sights."

Here the women became more numerous than the men; old women with gray hair, wearing on their heads old battered straw hats, and little black mantles thrown over their shoulders; coarse-faced, coarse-featured, and about as whiskey soaked as the men; middle-aged women, better dressed, with coarse painted faces. Some of these old rakes wore rings on their fingers, clear to the first joint, that flashed and sparkled, and shot out gleams of pure white light, with every wave of their fans. Young women with lace scarf's thrown over their heads, their bold bright eyes shining out from the thick paint and powder on their comely features. Some very, very pretty, and now and then one saw amidst the throng a really handsome face.

"Take a good look at this girl coming toward us," said Gene, laying his hand on my arm, "the tall girl in the buff lawn, with all that fluffy black lace up about

her shoulders and neck. She is Kate Malone, but the boys called her Kate Kearney, on account of her beautiful Irish blue eyes, her musical voice, and her gay, ringing laugh. She lived across the street from us on the third floor of the tenement house opposite, with her mother, a widow, and two brothers. She was employed in a wholesale millinery house, and had a good position. One day, like Nina, she disappeared, and was gone over three years, when one night I happened to meet her plying her vocation. She did not recognize me at first, not until I called her name, then she burst into tears, and begged me not to tell her mother, or her brothers, that I had seen her. Her brothers are indifferent, careless fellows; they have never put themselves out to find her. I asked her to walk a few blocks with me, and she told me how she came to leave home, how she was trapped into it by the lying promises of a son of her employer. Then he left her, and she became what she is now. I begged and plead with her to go home to her mother. She said, "Some day I want to meet once more the man who ruined me. I have a few things to settle with him. I know I will meet him sooner or later. Every night I take up my hunt for him. You men don't know how persistent a woman is in a chase like this. Oh, yes, I shall meet him, when he is not looking for me."

"Before we parted I asked her if she ever came across any girl, whom she thought looked like my sister Nina, for she had left home before Nina, and it was not likely she had ever heard of Nina's disappearance. She said she would recognize Nina anywhere, and would be apt to remark any girl who resembled her, for few of the girls had Nina's beauty. Well here we are at Fourteenth Street. There is the big Metropolitan Temple, the church where Dr. Cadman preaches, he is a very able speaker, they hold meetings there every night, it must be long after service time, for the church is closed now."

We walked east on Fourteenth Street until we came to Sixth Avenue. Late as it was, the street was ablaze with light, while all the drygoods, and clothing shops were closed, the bakerys, confectioners, restaurants,

cafés, saloons, and hotels were open, and filled with people, like as if it were day. As we stood under the station of the Sixth Avenue elevated road, we debated whether to go up to Union Square, and take a Broadway cable car, farther down town, but we finally concluded to take the elevated cars, and get out at the Eighth Street station.

"Here is the train now," said Gene. In a few moments we were up the stairs, and on the platform ; as soon as the train slacked up and the gates flew open, we boarded a car, we were scarcely on when the train pulled up at Clinton Place, the Eighth Street station where we got out.

When we had walked a block or two, we crossed over to the opposite corner and stopped under a lamp post. I looked at my watch, it was half after one. There was no crowd here, although Broadway runs in here, with its great tall buildings, and brilliant lights, and the high rows of dark houses, farther up on Clinton Place, many of them old and dilapidated. As we walked on all was quiet, the silence only broken now and then by the footfall on the flagstone of a lone pedestrian.

"By George, Mr. Osgood, look up yonder, there is the patrol covered wagon, the police are making a quiet raid on that large house, come let us station ourselves here, in the shadow, of these high steps, the police will not observe us, from this distance, and we can see all that goes on. My ! Mr. Osgood, how you tremble," remarked Gene, as I run my arm through his and clutched it above the elbow, for I was all alive, and on fire, with nervous tension.

From where I stood, I could see through the slats of the closed blinds, lights passing, to and fro, the hurrying, and scurrying inside, of women. I could see two women, sitting in the wagon, a police officer sat in the front seat holding the reins of the horses. Ah, the door opens, I can see an officer, drag a girl out, I can see that she is very young, she has a long black cloak, wrapped about her, she is bareheaded, and her long black hair, falls, in rumpled braids down her back, as if she had just unfastened them from their comb. She seems

to plead with him, she don't want to go, she crouches down at his feet, but he picks her, up bodily, carries her down the steps, and almost flings her into the wagon.

Before he has time to return, two more women are brought out, the policeman holding each by the arm. He hustles them into the wagon; that makes five women. I see him, turn and go back into the house again, while the one who brought the young girl out, stands by her, on the pavement. Now the lights have been all turned out in the house, the officer comes out and closes the door, after him and locks it, runs down the steps, and jumps into the wagon, the police officer, standing on the pavement, follows after, and they drive away. Not a man was arrested. The police let them all escape. Not a sound was heard from the poor women, God help them, my heart, turned sick at the sight of so much injustice.

"Let us follow them," said Gene, as I stood dumb, and almost paralyzed at the sight of such awful injustice, "they will be taken to the tombs."

"We must pretend to be reporters, or we will not be admitted this time of night," I said to Gene, as we hurried on after the wagon, which was driven west, then north in the direction of Centre Street, where the old prison tombs is situated.

"I fear I shall not be able to play that game," said Gene, laughing.

"Well you must play you are looking for some one, a cousin, or a sister, which you are. You needn't give your right name, or the name of the sister, or the cousin you are looking for." The wagon had preceded us by several minutes, and the girls, were not in sight, when we arrived. We went up the stone steps, and into the wide stone floored hall. The gas was burning dimly, it was dark, and gloomy with a cold sepulchral air, and smell. The air and smell peculiar to prisons, and especially old buildings, that for years, have been the sheltering places, of criminals, this strange species of the human race

One of the three police, who made the arrest, and who was an officer, stood in the corridor. "Well ye's knows

how it is," he said, in a broad Irish brogue, when I told him that I had witnessed the arrest of the girls, from the opposite side of the street, that I was a reporter for the "World," and I wished to make an item, of it, for the paper. And the young man, with me was in search of a cousin of his, a young girl. "Well ye knows how it is," he repeated, "it's our orders to break these resorts up. If the preachers go an makin' a fuss, an' havin' laws passed, we're in duty bound, to now an' thin to enforce them, to kape our hand in, by the way, ye know.

"It's all the Riverend Mr. Parkhurst's doin's, an' that Lexow Committee, an' sure what good, have all the fuss done, not a bit, only to make crime more flagrant. Ye's knows of course that a police officer runs the chance now of losin' his job, by the way, if he's caught figurin' his palm, with a ten or twenty, but we makes them pay one way, or another. Of course we're in duty bound to take them down. Ye's knows my lads, how to make it smooth. Ha, ha. Ye's can go in now," he said, moving along the hall, "there's plenty of them in here, an' if ye young man, find yer cousin, among the girls, jist take her along wid ye, an' if ye want help jist call me."

He unlocked a door that led into a wide passageway, "Ye's can jist pretend ye're prisoners for the night." There were small grated cells on each side, and iron-railed doors. The doors, were all open, but two. These cells were merely to hold the arrests for the night. At the south end of this short passageway, was a large room, with two small windows, barred with iron bars. In this room we found the five girls, just brought in. The gas here was faint and flickering and the air, was chill and damp, which made me shiver as with ague, the walls that were once upon a time white, were now a grayish mud color, as if the plaster had absorbed the soil and grime, of years. The stone floor, was worn slippery by the tramp, tramp, of many feet, and was cracked and broken, and exuded dampness from every pore. Rats and mice, ran in and out as fearless, and frolicsome, as children at play. Insects and creeping things, crawled up and down the walls, and the benches

were black with the reverend, and hoary dirt of a century. To the left hand side crouched up in one corner, was the girl I saw the police officer pick up and carry down the steps of the house, and fling into the wagon, like as if she were a bundle of clothes. She was very young, not more than sixteen or seventeen, years of age. Her long braids of brown-black hair, half loosened hung down over her neck, and shoulders, and its tangled bang, lay upon a low, wide forehead. She had an Italian type of face, with a rich olive complexion, and large black eyes ; the nose from the forehead down, was straight, and delicate, but the mouth with its full red lips, was somewhat coarse and sensual. Peeping out from under a long black silk circular, old and worn, but fur-lined, were two small feet, in low black slippers, with satin bows, and light blue silk stockings. The young thing seemed to shiver with cold, finally she rose up, and with a quick impatient gesture of her arm, flung back one side of her circular, and to my surprise and utter amazement, she had nothing on underneath, but a white chemise, and underwear, all lace and ruffles, and her long blue silk hose, that were drawn up over her long slim limbs. Her figure was also tall and slim, and made me think of Bougeroue's painting of *La Cigale*, she had just such a face and just such large soft mournful eyes.

"Zelda, draw that cloak about you, you will catch your death of cold in this miserable place," called a woman who was walking up and down the stone floor in front of the benches where the girls were seated. She was from thirty to thirty-five years old, of medium size, and good figure. She wore a light evening brocaded silk, she was well corsetted, and well laced, for its bodice fit her to perfection. Her yellow hair lay in fluffy curls all over her head, and setting jauntly upon her curls was a white straw hat, with white wings and feathers. Her face was large, and not by any means forbidding.

"I warned you about Perkins, the brute!" she continued, "he slid down into the basement and out, the coward, and left you to the mercy of the police. We'll see now if he'll come before morning and bail you out, the cowardly miscreant." Her cheeks were aflame, and

her light-blue eyes looked like balls of fire as she clasped her white hands, laden with rings, together, in nervous indignation.

"The brutes! traitors! to leave us in the clutches of the police," she cried, pacing up and down, the heels of her shoes clicking upon the stone flooring, their echo falling back again from the dingy walls. Zelda rose to her feet, shook out her long cloak, wrapped it closer about her, smiled at one of the girls who was seated near her, and crouched down in her corner again, and drew her feet up under her cloak.

"Zelda's just in trim for the ballet, she can tell the judge, if Perkins don't show up before morning, that she was arrested as she came from the stage," the girl laughed heartily. She was about twenty years of age, a fair rosy-cheeked blond, with a profusion of golden hair, and large green-blue eyes, shaded by long light lashes. She was of medium height, her round plump figure clad in a thin blue lawn, with large gay flowers running through it. It was draped over blue silk, it's bodice low necked and short sleeve, showing the white shapely arms and bosom. Thrown over her head and shoulders was a white knit shawl, the first thing she could pick up for a covering when arrested.

"Mima, it would become you better if you kept your remarks to yourself, this is not the parlor of No. —, C—— Place." Mima looked at the girl, who was seated next to her, and tittered. This girl was nearly twenty-three years of age, and had the broad face, the deep-blue eye, and the dark chestnut-brown hair of the Irish-American girl. She was tall, and straight as an arrow, with much manner and dash about her, indicating her fast life, without marked coarseness. She wore a red silk waist trimmed in masses of white lace, and a black satin skirt, and black straw hat covered with gay flowers.

"Umph, one might as well be merry as sad. If Tom don't make his appearance before morning, I'll snap my fingers in his face and call it quits with him. A fellow that will go back on a girl like this ain't worth a kick from my old shoe, and is a low, mean sneak. He was

in the parlor with the rest of us, when the police came; how he got out, I don't know."

She rose up, and walked to where Zelda crouched in her corner. "Cheer up, Zelda," she said, seating herself between Mima and the poor young thing. "I'd make a point to get even with Perkins; he has plenty of money. He could have made it worth the police officer's while, not to drag you here in that plight." Zelda shivered as she spoke, and the tears moistened her large dark eyes.

"Perkins is one of the lowest, and meanest principled young men in New York City," said the woman, who walked up and down and seemed to be the guardian of the girls. "I warned her when she came to my house and told me her story, not to have anything to say to Perkins. He lavishes his money on a girl for a while, then it's all over; he will sell a woman every time. I am going to shut the door of my house against him," and the Madame adjusted her hat, and the heels of her shoes came down on the stone floor with a firmer click.

The fifth girl sat up in the corner near Zelda; she was low of stature, but plump and round, with a Jewish type of face. Black haired, coarse-featured, and had a large sensual mouth. She was also dressed in evening costume, with a bright silk waist and black skirt, low shoes, and red stockings.

In the opposite corner of the room to my right, was another group of girls, and walking up and down in front of them, like a guard, was a woman, large and stout, and of nearly fifty years of age. Her years were not to be guessed from any show of silver threads among the golden-brown hair of her wig. Her face was large, broad, and fat, with coarse features, and a hard dissipated expression. She was dressed in a rich black satin brocade, the waist open in V shape at the neck, and falling away over the bust and shoulders, and back of the neck, was costly white lace, showing her full white throat; the sleeves came just to her elbows, with a deep ruffle of the lace, but leaving quite a display of her white fat arms, and the broad Roman gold bracelets which clasped her wrists. The large, white fat hands,

were laden to the first joint of her finger with rings, whose costly stone settings gleamed and flashed in that dark, cold prison, like stars sending out different hued lights. Wrapped about her head and shoulders was a black lace scarf, a costly fabric. She let a great oath out of her as she walked up and down, and her ample bosom rose and fell with wrathful indignation.

"Them police will swear to a woman protection, take her last cent, and this is the way they do it. We're outcasts as they calls us, but we're women, and human bein's all the same, and have some feelin', an' perhaps not half so bad as them as pertends to be better. I wish they'd let me spake through the newspapers, I could tell the Riverend Mr. Parkhurst a thing or two; I could give a few names that would open the Riverend gentleman's eyes, and the Lexow Committee too, an' if that body of dignified gentlemen did hear them, they'd have them suppressed, for I never saw them in print. I have kept house in this city nearly thirty years, an' I know a thing or two, if I'd care to squeal. An' after all's said an' done, whose made us what we are? The cowards who desert us, sneak off and leave us to the mercy of the inhuman brutes of the law, as if we had broken any law. We hasn't stole or murdered, or picked pockets, and niver a girl has I allowed to be wronged in my house," and she let another great oath out of her.

"I'll niver be taken here alive, again, nor will I let a boarder in my house, be brought to this pest-hole, that's sure. It makes me crawl all over, and I am not over sensitive." As she walked up and down, the dim flame of the gas-jets, flickered and threw out her shadow on the stone floor, the shadow of the woman on the opposite side of the room, lengthened until their heads touched, and they seemed to clasp each other around the waist, and waltz to the click of their heels, whose vibration resounded like the stroke of the stone mason's hammer, and came echoing back from the dirty grimy walls, where the figures, and the faces of the girls, made grotesque silhouettes.

"Let us go," said Gene, "it makes me sick; my very

soul revolts against such sights. Like politics, and government, might is right here."

We were just in the act of turning to leave when we heard the key click in the lock of the passageway door. I turned my eyes in that direction, for we were standing in the hall, before the door, which led into the room I have been just describing. "Heavens," I cried inwardly, as the door swung open, and a whole batch of women were pushed in. "Let us stand aside, up here in the corner, Gene, and let them pass in." I counted fourteen, scarcely one of them over thirty, and from that down to sixteen, and seventeen. The most conspicuous figures in the crowd, were three girls, in long black silk cloaks, like Zelda's wrapped about them, only theirs were newer and of richer material. It appeared they were arrested at some club-house, where they were engaged to dance a certain kind of dance, during the evening. These girls had so attracted my attention, that I paid little heed to the others, only to give them a sweeping glance, until Gene touched me on the shoulder. "Kate Kearney, by George," he said in a sort of hoarse whisper, his face a gray pallor.

"The deuce, there she is sure, that tall, straight figure of a girl in the buff dress, and black lace, the one you pointed out to me on Seventh Avenue, I had but a passing view of her then, but now that I see her closer, she is decidedly handsome. With large Irish blue eyes, blue as violets, and shaded by long dark lashes, a pale skin and finely shaped expressive features. The whole face, framed by a peculiar shade of russet-brown hair, the kind that Titian painted and yet somewhat different too, as it belongs solely to the daughters of the Irish, of that type of beauty, and I could think of no word more suited to this girl, than the word, fine. A pang shot through my heart, as I stood watching her and thought, how could anyone, man or woman, mar so perfect a being physically, for the life she lead, was beginning to leave its marks upon her face; she looked to me as if she had been drinking, and was reckless and desperate. Another girl, with repulsive aspect, stood near her, and was addressing some remark to her, which made Kate laugh

and then I heard the voice that Gene spoke of, ring out. Although a little hysterical, it was delightfully musical, rising in vibrations like a clarionette, then dying away on the ear, in the low tones of a flute.

"I will save her from the Island," said Gene. "If some one don't go on her bail, she will be sent to the Island, to work her fine out. I can pretend to the captain of the police, she is the cousin I was in search of."

The girls in the long black cloaks, whose spirits were not the least bit daunted, although they were all arrested in their dancing costume, the police giving them no time to change their attire, wrapped their cloaks about them which nearly all women of that timbre carry with them, being out late at night.

"I don't care zat," cried one, snapping her fingers, and throwing back her circular, showing a long, lithe body, and limbs, in silk flesh-colored tights. Just a white satin girdle around her waist, all crusted with jewels, a white satin scarf, crossed over from the left shoulder, under the bosom, and fastened to the right, and her arms and neck were aflame with shining gems. "My agent will be zere in a little while. Ah, I feel zo zorrie fo pauvre Madamoiselles. Oh, police, zo horrible. Ize no bad, to dance ize ma profession. Za young Messieurs, za must have me dance, Ize dance fo pay. Za young Messieurs, za must have zare frolic, za drink whisky an' za go to hell anyway, an' za police can une stop zem. Mon Dieu it ize zo horrible," and she stuck out her little foot, in its white satin soleless slipper, and upon her ankles, were wide bracelets of gold, studded with jewels. Ah, bah, zare ize no use to feel zad, *mer chères*, I like to make you feel light. You like me dance, I za un mind, I zink ite ize za stage, in mon Maison de Ville." And she threw back her head, a mass of black curls, and laughed, a ringing laugh. "I will no dance ze dance, I dance for za young Messieurs," she went on in her gay French way, "but I like za amuse, ma pauvre femme dejouies." The woman on the right of me in the black satin dress, stopped her pacing up and down, the younger madame to the left did the same, and the girls

cleared the middle of the floor, and stood about in a ring.

The French woman tied her circular cloak at her neck, and let it fall down about her ankles, then with her right hand she lifted up one corner of it, stretched out a beautifully formed, and slender leg, straight out like an arm. Then slowly from the heel, lifted the left foot, until she stood on her large toe, then spun around and around, like a top. With the left hand, she raises the left corner of her cloak, skirt, also her left leg, until it almost touches her head, and stands on the big toe of her right foot, and whirls and spins around like a wheel. She throws her cloak up, and gathers it in fan shape, about her shoulders, bends her long, slender serpentine body, and skips across the floor, her small feet barely touching the flag-stones.

All the women stand about silently, and intently watching, glad for a few moments to forget their troubles, and disgrace. Lightly as a feather, the dancer trips, gracefully she bounds, and rounds, in sensuous abandon. Faster, she turns and hurls, and swirls, and coils, her limber body like a snake. I drew my hand across my eyes, to shut out the sight of this prison room. Its walls black and grimy with filth, crime, and sin of a century, and the witness of many such gruesome scenes. The windows thick with dust and cobwebs, the dim flickering of the gas-jets, with their sickly flame, throwing the shadows of the upturned faces of the women, on the wall's dingy surface, these poor creatures arrested and thrown into prison, while their partners in sin go free. How different from all the ideals of my youth, my boyhood, my home, and my own lovely and gentle mother. I am sure she would be pitiful to such as these.

On went the dancer in her pirouetting, in her fantastic gyrations, her shadow on the wall, looking like some impish demon, which had come to mock these poor wretched outcasts. On she went, in her mad whirls, madder, and madder, until her cloak wound all about her body, from her shoulders to her ankles, like the coils of a black snake. Then with a leap and a bound she stops in the middle of the floor, crosses her arms, and

bows to her audience. The women shake their handkerchiefs, smile, nod their heads, but not a sound above the voice of speech, is heard. "Za young Messieurs, pay one-hundred dollars fo zat dance. I left out much za oui." The other two dancers unwound her cloak, and wrapped it about her, she then followed them to the bench where they seated themselves; her spirits had fallen, she seemed to have worked off all her exuberance in her dance, poor thing, for she sat without speaking a word to her companions, with her head bent, and her hands covering her face.

"I am going to speak to Kate Kearney," said Gene, "then we will go," and with that the hall door opened again, and two women, with the matron of the prison entered.

I stood as if rooted to the floor, in my surprise, for I saw the queenly figure, the stately air, the long black silk mantle, the white hat, and long white veil of gauze, of my Lady of the Boulevard. "Stay," I said to Gene, "don't go in yet, here is some one I have met before, the lady I told you about," for I had related to Gene, that night's experience on the Boulevard. The woman accompanying my Lady, was of medium height, rather stout, but of good figure. She wore a black dress, of some thin material, and around her shoulders, a small black cape. She had a large pleasant face, small laughing blue eyes, and silver threads streaked her coarse, abundant brown hair, which was combed back from her brow in a sort of pompadour style. Upon her head, she wore a little black straw bonnet trimmed with plain black ribbon, the strings of the ribbon tied under her chin. While her clothes looked as if they were pitched on her with a fork, and like Peggotty, she had burst a button here and there, and used a pin for the lack of time to sew the button on again. Yet there was about her a very respectable air. And one thing impressed me more than anything else, in her whole appearance, was the religious fervor that shone in her face.

As my Lady passes me, her large calm eyes, brightened with recognition, and when she entered the room, followed by her companion, a buzz of whispers, went around

from one to the other. Those who knew her told those who didn't, who and what her mission was, those so far as they knew, but most of them had a sort of superstitious awe of her, mingled with great respect.

"My sisters," she said in a voice low, musical, but distinct, "I would have saved you from this prison, but I was too far away from the patrol wagon. I caught a glimpse of you, about three blocks away; my visual sight did not reach quite that far, but I saw you; neither did my power, if I had been nearer, I could have stopped the wagon, until I came up. I can't save you now from the sentence of the judge, unless some of your friends come and go your bail, which means to go back to your old life of sin, and have this repeated again and again. But if any woman here during our prayer, experiences a change of heart, and repents, I will take them with me to a place of shelter, where they will be cared for, made comfortable and taught, until they throw off old habits, and sins, and become new women. Now my sisters, let us kneel in prayer. Mrs. Marstan, lead us in prayer."

The Madame in black satin, who had enjoyed the dance so hugely a few moments before, went down on her knees, with a flop, so did most of the girls, Kate Kearney with them. The three dancers, with a few others sat in stolid indifference, but the younger Madame, on the left, knelt, and my lady, herself, knelt on the cold flag-stones. Katherine, as she called her friend, had fallen upon her knees the first one, and for a second there could have been heard a pin drop.

Then I saw Katherine raise one hand up to her head, and tilt her bonnet to one side, by the way of a prelude, then raise both hands and press them together, then she began in clear distinct tones. She plead with God, to send the holy spirit, in great power, and touch the hearts of these poor children of sin. "My God," she cried out, "be merciful. Come with all thy consuming fire, and burn the sin out of them. This awful sin, which has dragged them down to this prison to-night, this den of iniquity, when they should be safely housed, and asleep hours ago, in their beds, like Christians, tucked in by their mothers, and enjoying the sweet sleep of the pure

and blessed children of God, and watched over by His angels. See my children, see my sisters, see yourselves, what the wages of sin are. This prison-room, with its reeking filth, its vermin-creeping walls, its slimy stones, damp with the disease, and sickness, of crime. Alive with rats and mice, and human beings made into rats and mice, by sin. From your luxuriously furnished rooms, from the brilliant gilded stage, from the wine-cup, from your lovers' arms, from all the sensual pleasures, which have dragged you here, where even the gas can throw out but a sickly flame; dark, damp and cold, with disease and death. Your lovers, my children, where are they? Have they stood by you, have they stretched forth a helping hand, to save you from prison, disgrace, and death? ah, yes, death, in its worst sense. This is human frailty, this is man's cowardice. Fear not him, who can but kill the body, but rather fear Him, who can destroy both body, and soul.

“Oh, I pray you my sisters, turn to one who will never forsake you. ‘He who comes unto me I will in no wise cast out.’ So spoke the Saviour of men; oh, how gentle He was, how loving, how divinely sweet and gracious; how He longed to gather the erring and sin-sick into His fold, and especially such as you, my poor sisters. Pure Himself, as the mountain dew, and the stars that first sang in the morning of the creation, He has never turned a deaf ear, to the sinner.” Her voice had risen from low, soft notes, higher, and higher, it rang in trumpet-like sounds, until it seemed to pierce the old walls of the prison, and make them tremble and crack, with its depths and strength, of pleadings to God.

“I thank thee, my heavenly Father,” she continued, “that thou didst send thy beloved son, down to earth, to teach the children of men, for it was, and could be only through Him, that we have learned of thee. That thou art not the awful, terrible, and jealous God of the Jews, but the loving Father. Oh, turn to Him, my sisters, I beg of you to turn to this blessed Christ Jesus, the Saviour of men. He will give you a new heart, He will cleanse you from all sin, if you repent, He will wash you whiter than snow. Come, oh Holy Spirit, Heavenly

Dove, and touch these dead hearts, these dead souls, dead in trespasses and sin, and touch them with coals of living fire; awake them my God, awake them to a sense of the sin in them, I pray thee for Christ's sake."

As the last sentence died on her lips, there was a noise in the corner to the left, and over the benches, came leaping the slim, girlish figure of Zelda, in her old black silk cloak, who threw herself on her knees beside my lady, and flung her arms about her neck. "Oh, save me, Madame, save me from this prison, I will go with you anywhere, I will be so good, I will work for you, I will be your slave, if you will just but save me. I have never been in prison before. See Madame," and she threw back her cloak, "I was arrested in this condition. I will die of shame, if I have to go before the judge in the morning. I will not go, I will destroy myself first. I will plunge this, Madame, into my heart, rather than go before the judge in this plight," and she opened her closed hand, and showed lying in her small palm, an ivory-handled lady's penknife. "I brought it along in case Perkins shouldn't come to release me."

"Perkins," cried my lady, who had risen from her knees, and was standing with her hand on the head of the still kneeling Zelda. "Ah, my poor girl, if the police would arrest and chain this monster Perkins, this wolf in sheep's clothing, who goes about devouring the lambs; but instead they arrest the lambs, and let the wolves go free. Ah, when will justice ever reign?"

"Take me, Madame, you are so good I love you, I will never go with Perkins, if he should come this minute, no never, I hate him."

"Rise my dear child, I will take you home with me. Any one else?"

No one moved, I looked in the direction of where Kate Kearney sat, she had her handkerchief to her eyes, and seemed to be weeping. Katherine took charge of Zelda, but the poor girl clung to my lady with childish tenacity. "Mrs. Marstan will take charge of you dear, while I go and speak with this gentleman." She then came out to the door, where Gene and myself, stood. "I am so pleased to see you here," she said, holding out

her hand to me, "how did you manage to gain admittance behind the scenes?"

"As a reporter," I answered.

"Could you find me a hack, I am going to take that young girl home to my house."

"I shall only be too glad to serve you, in any way. Will you allow me to introduce you to my friend, Mr. Eugene Lunis, Mr. Lunis, this is—" I hesitated a moment, "My Lady."

"I have something here for you," she replied, her beautiful eyes and mouth, smiling at me. "I have been carrying it since we first met, to give you when chance should throw us together again; I don't mean to say, that our meeting here is chance. Oh, no, that would be silly, to think that; you recollect I told you that night that we didn't meet to part so soon." She took from her pocket, a finely wrought silver card-case, opened it and handed me a card. I thanked her, and placed it in the inside pocket of my coat. Mrs. Marstan, and my Lady, after having a few moment's conversation with the woman Zelda had boarded with, came out, Mrs. Marstan leading the poor shivering girl by the hand. Gene, in the meantime had gone to speak with Kate Kearney, and bring her into the hall. She cried bitterly, when she saw him. Then Mrs. Marstan, Gene, Kate Kearney, my Lady, and myself, went to the door, where a police officer stood on guard, he opened the door, and allowed us to pass out into the entrance hall, where we found the same sergeant. Gene told him he had found his cousin, and she had consented to go home with him. "All right, ye jist take her along wid ye, no use havin' any preliminaries."

"Wait here Gene, until I return, I am going to call a carriage for my Lady, then we will both see Kate to her home. In a few minutes I was back, not having far to go for the hack; my Lady spoke to the driver and told him where she wanted him to go. "We will all stop there to-night, Katherine, it is too late now to go out to the Park."

I handed my Lady into the carriage, then Mrs. Marstan and Zelda, whose large eyes smiled up in my face, as I

lifted her bodily into the cab. "Adieu," said my Lady, holding out her hand to me, "God be with you, till we meet again."

"Adieu, and God bless you," I answered, and the cab was driven away. I went back to the hall where Gene, and Kate awaited me.

"Did ye know that woman, ye jist now got the cab for? I mane the tall one."

"I have met her once before," I replied.

"The police dread her, she seems to be a sort of a magician, there's no knowing where she'll turn up on us. She's on the track of all them women. I don't moind her getting hold of the lambs, loike the kid she captured to-night, but if she thinks she can reform them old stagers, she's moightly mistaken."

Gene thanked the sergeant for allowing him to take his cousin home. "Yis, if ye can kape her home; I hope ye will wid all me heart, if ye can."

We left the prison, Kate walking by the side of Gene; she was deeply affected, and she wept bitterly, as Gene pleaded with her, to go back home to her mother. "Give me time to think Gene, about it," she said, through her tears. "If you and your friend, will just see me to my lodgings, for the police will arrest me again, if I am caught on the street this hour of the night alone."

At last we reached Kate Kearney's lodgings, and stood before its door a moment. "Don't Mr. Lunis, I beg of you, tell my mother, or my brothers, of this, or that you ever laid eyes on me since I left home. I am forever dead to them. Good-night, and I thank you over and over again, for your kindness; you have saved me from the Island, good-night." Gene took the hand she held out to him, and shook it warmly, and she went in, and as she closed the door, the faint light of the approaching dawn fell over her, and she passes out of sight, as a traveller, met on the roadside of life's journey, and is seen no more.

When we reached Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue, we stopped a moment under the elevated station. "She was not among them," said Gene, holding

out his hand to me. "No, and I would stake my life, Nina never will be found among that class."

"Never," I answered, "but she will be found, some day, Gene, and I am sure before long," I said, by way of easing my conscience, for it accused me of selfishness in not telling him of her discovery before, but I had my plans and I wished to carry them out. We parted here with the promise to soon meet again. As I stood upon the platform of the elevated station, waiting to take the cars to go home, the dawn was breaking in the east, and the great city awakening to action, that is if it ever sleeps. Several men were on the platform, and others came trooping up, then the train from down-town, came steaming in, when I entered the car, it was crowded with men, of all kinds and conditions in life, and following all callings, returning to their lodging-houses and homes. Men who work by night, as well as by day. New York City is a bee-hive, while one-half of its population sleeps. the other works, plays and dissipates, and vice versa. When I arrived at the Quinton mansion, Michael was not yet up, which pleased me greatly. I stole quietly in and up to my room. When I went to close the inside blinds of my windows, so that I might have a few hours sleep, I looked up to the sky. The deep violets of the night, had faded into a clear azure blue, flecked by white fleecy clouds illumined by the glory of the eastern heavens. And pale golden beams streaked the shutters, I closed them and ended my night's vigil.

CHAPTER VII.

MARGARET DEVERAUX.—AT HOME.

The first thing on rising, which I did very late, was to feel in my coat pocket for the card my lady handed me at the Tombs. I found engraved upon it the name, 'Madame Margaret Deveraux, No. — Audubon Park, At Home Fridays from three to ten P. M., and Wednes-

day evenings. On the back was written, "come Wednesday evening, I shall have more time to talk with you." Margaret Deveraux. Two or three evenings after the scenes in the Tombs, I left my room, having in prospective an exceedingly and delightful visit.

I was not acquainted with the location my Lady lived in, but on making inquiries I found that the Sixth Avenue elevated train would take me to a hundred and seventieth Street, the end of the line, and it was in that vicinity.

After leaving the train I had to climb two or three long flights of stairs, which brought me to a broad, clean stone paved street, but that part of it was a bridge, crossing a deep ravine to the heights and hills beyond. It was quite a walk west from the station, and uphill, but charming. I got a glimpse of the country, stretches of open unbuilt ground, here and there a stately elm, or ash, which wafted a whiff of cool fresh scented breeze to my cheek as I passed them. Although the tall houses, and the big obnoxious apartment hotels followed me, they were not so close together.

As I walked I came across some old homesteads with tall trees clustering about them, the closing August days having tinged to russet some of their leaves. Like the man, or woman, coming to the forties finds a few silver threads among the brown, the black or gold hair. After crossing Tenth Avenue, I caught a glimpse of the beautiful Audubon Cemetery, where there is a fine monument and bust of white marble of the great naturalist. I also had a view of the blue waters of the Hudson. On the opposite side of the street I saw a police officer; I crossed over and inquired of him the direction of the Park, he very civilly pointed to an open gate about half a block away. As I entered the gate, I thought what a charming place this private park is, with its magnificent trees, its green lawns, its fine old frame mansions, with their broad porches, piazzas and baywindows, and gable roofs, reminding me of the homes of the rich, and well-to-do in my own city, only they were built of brick and stone.

I soon found the number given on the card; it was a

large old-fashioned mansion of two stories, and built of wood, with porches, porticoes, and bay-windows. Such a house as I would imagine my Lady to live in. I rang the bell, which was answered by a maid; a bright-faced woman of thirty years or older, in a white cap and apron. I was admitted into a wide old-time hall, broad and long as a room, with a spacious winding stairway that would delight the heart and eye of an artist; also a hall-tree of old-fashioned mahogany, where I hung my hat and left my cane.

I gave my card to the maid as she ushered me into a large room to my left, with bow-windows. In comparison to Mr. Quinton's and Nina's house, its furnishings and decorations were plain, but it showed a simplicity, originality, and an exceeding purity, and refinement of taste in every article, which pleased me greatly. In its white muslin curtains, willow chairs, cushioned and draped in soft materials, and artistic colors. In its easy lounges, pictures, some fine old oil-paintings, small, but by the best masters; also several exquisite water colors. A fine old steel engraving of the Madonna, of the Lily, a favorite with women of the Madame Deveraux kind; this hung in a gilt frame of Italian workmanship over the mantelpiece. Lovely Oriental rugs, soft as feathers, and matching the carpet of delicate blue ground, and books, everywhere, in cases, on shelves, and on the large center-table. A large Steinway piano and an organ stood in the lower end of the room, and lying on the piano was a violin case. The bric-a-brac was numerous, and of the best; and across the hall I caught a glimpse of what I took to be the drawing-room. I had not been seated long, when I heard a light footstep, and the swish of drapery, and Madame Margaret Deveraux, who I shall still designate as my Lady, entered, and extended to me her hand. My heart leaped to my mouth and almost choked me, as I rose from my seat, and my eyes rested a moment in worshipful reverence on this lovely woman, this vision in white. My pen fails me here, I cannot describe how her robe was made, I only know that it seemed to drape and swathe her body, trail and float about her tall, magnificent figure. Her dark

abundant hair was brushed back from her noble brow, its coils fastened at the back of the ears with a comb of pearls. The gray streak, so conspicuous, made a fillet of silver crowning the head, which rose grandly on her ivory column-like neck. And oh, her face, so strangely beautiful, so young, and yet so mature in thought, and intellect; so motherly with it all. I took her hand and bent low before her, unable to speak, but she soon put me at my ease.

"I am pleased to see you here to-night," she said, "be seated." But I remained standing until she seated herself in one of the easy chairs, when I resumed mine, but first drawing it nearer to hers.

"I have much to say to you," she continued, raising a white shapely hand, and smoothing the coils of her hair; a habit with some women. I observed that she wore but a plain band of gold on the third finger of the left hand, which told me she was either a wife or a widow; this was all the ring she wore, not another piece of jewelry about her person. "Although we are strangers, but not strangers in spirit."

"I do so wish not to be a stranger on that line," I replied. "While I think no man can hope to reach to the spiritual heights of an intellectual pure and stainless woman, his very nature is against it, yet he can strive for a higher spiritual plane, and woman can do much to help him."

"Yes, if men will allow her; still few women make use of the power which is theirs; most of them are ignorant of it, even where the nature is refined, and the inclinations intellectual and spiritual, they remain dormant, undeveloped, and rather retard than help the father, brother, or husband."

"I suppose one acts upon the other, and vice versa," I remarked. "No two lives exist," she said, "when bound together in the close relationship of marriage, but one acts upon the other. If the husband is a man in whom the moral is at a low ebb, and the animal reigns king, and his wife the opposite, she will either influence him to seek better things, or after awhile go down to his level. But if she has the courage and the strength

to go steadily on in her own course, pursuing the higher life, and she cannot lead the husband with her, he will be sure, sooner or later to create in her a repugnance and contempt. They may live out their lives together in this way; some for the sake of their children, some for other reasons, and there are those who still hope for the man's improvement. And it may be that the wife is the animal, and the husband the superior, and seeker after a higher life, which can be much attained to here on this earth. I was very much surprised to find you at the Tombs the other night. I knew we would meet again, but the Tombs never entered my head, and at such a late hour. Why the morning was breaking when our carriage stopped at the gate of my downtown house. Did you follow the last patrol wagon full?"

" My young friend Eugene Lunis and myself, started out early in the evening on a reconnoitering tour of the city to see what we could see. He was the pilot, being born and reared in New York City, and acquainted with its streets from its center to its circumference." I then related to her, all the incidents of how we came to be in the Tombs prison, and after witnessing some strange and grawsome performance by the women arrested, we were just in the act of leaving when the last wagon full was brought in, and which was the one she followed.

" Yes, Katharine and myself were detained at the door for several minutes talking to the sergeant. The police have a great dislike to myself, and do all they can to hinder and thwart me in my work of reform among these women."

" If you had happened to be there ten or fifteen minutes sooner, you would have witnessed a strange sight. One of the three French women in the long black cloaks, arrested in all her stage regalia, danced the skirt dance to cheer her sisters in misfortune. She danced it by making a skirt of her long circular cloak, and if she didn't handle that cloak in an expert fashion it was a caution. I never saw anything like it, the famous Fanny Elsler, couldn't beat her. She evidently was not going to dance the skirt dance before her audi-

ence at the club, for she was not dressed for it. I believe the police heard of it, and therefore the arrest; I think she expended all her French exuberance of spirits caused by her arrest, and when brought to the prison worked it off in that way. For after her performance she seemed to realize where she was, went over to a bench where her companions had been seated, and threw herself down and buried her face in her hands; she remained in that position all through your talk and Mrs. Marstan's prayer."

"I did not send Zelda to the home as was my first intention; I brought her home here with me, and will keep her here for awhile. I learned from her that she is an orphan, brought up in a Catholic convent, from which she made her escape with a girl friend, who was at school there; Zelda was given leave from the Superioress to go home with this girl on a short visit. This girl was three years older than Zelda, and it seems there was a large family of small children besides herself. Zelda had been at the home of her girl friend for several weeks, the mother of her friend informed her, she would either have to return to the convent, or find herself another home. I have reason to believe from what Zelda told me, that her girl friend was not just what she ought to be, for she had much gentlemen company.

"One day, her companion accompanied by a young man, invited her to dine with them at a restaurant; here she was introduced to Perkins, who joined the party later, and paid for the feast. Perkins was very much taken with Zelda, who after two weeks' acquaintance with Perkins, left her schoolmate's house, and went to board with the woman, who was arrested with her the other evening. This establishment was found by Perkins, who had promised to marry my protégé, and she went there to get ready her trousseau. He did buy her two trunks full of beautiful clothes. The woman was true to her word, and sent them to her. The arrest and carrying to prison was the blow to her romance, and the denouement of the drama. She is

very repentant, begs me not to send her away, and weeps bitterly over her fall and Perkins's treachery.

" My household now consists of myself, my maid, housemaid, and cook, and a hired man. I keep no carriage now, having two years ago disposed of it; it is so easy now to get to all parts of the city by rail and street cars, besides, I am free from the care of a coachman and horses, and the money it costs me to keep them I can put to other use. I would not for the world have these know where I brought Zelda from. I also cautioned her never to divulge the secret to any of my servants. They will think she is some orphan girl who I have taken to find a home for; something that I often do. I see she has much refinement of nature, besides a clinging, affectionate disposition. I think I know who this Perkins is; he is the son of a millionaire; a profligate, and libertine, generous in some respects so far as money goes to the woman he ruins. Yes, my poor child, it will take some time to eradicate from her body and mind this fall. Mrs. Marstan, my companion on that night, is the matron of a home I established for these women, all through my own exertions. I own the house, and had it arranged for that purpose; two other prominent and wealthy women are interested in it now; they help with their money, but do not go out as I do to gather the lost sheep of the house of Israel into the fold.

" I have known Mrs. Marstan a number of years; she has been, and is a devoted Christian, and a great worker in the cause of Christ. She has the witness of the spirit to a wonderful degree, and is peculiarly gifted in prayer. She lost her husband about three years ago, he was a railroad engineer; an American, intelligent, high-spirited, moral, and of much eccentricity of character. From some cause he lost his position on the road. In the meantime he took a severe cold, which turned into consumption, and when he died he left her penniless. Before he passed to the other side, he was at peace with the world and his God, and died in Christ Jesus. After he died I brought Katherine to my house, where she remained until I founded my Home, and placed her in it as

matron; she is a great help to me; she has been, and is a sister to me in all things.

"When Katherine came to my house after the death of her husband, I had been a widow myself nearly two years. I tell you this so that you may know something of what led up to my present mode of life. But unlike my friend, I had not the happiness of seeing my husband die a Christian. When twenty years of age, I married a man whom I thought the very embodiment of my ideal (my bump of ideality is quite prominent). He was peculiarly handsome, and manly in appearance; he had all the elegance of manner, which breeding, family, social position, and a fine education gives to a man. These advantages don't always polish the man, and make him a gentleman. But Doctor Deveraux was the ideal of my dreams of a husband; he was very gifted, a lover of music, literature, the drama and fine arts, and all that was beautiful, good, and true; as I supposed. He was the son of an eminent Episcopalian clergyman. They were an old aristocratic family, but not rich. My husband had studied for a physician, and intended to make that his profession. He was in his thirtieth year when we were married. I think my large fortune had something to do with his downfall.

"My father dying a few years after our marriage, and I being an only child, my mother having died ten years before, I was sole heir to my father's large estate. His will also, after a few bequests, left all to me, and placed it in such a way that my husband would have no control over it. My father knew I would not squander foolishly the fortune he intrusted to my care. Still it did not hinder my husband from using large sums of my money. I was a willing giver to him, until I saw the fortune that I must render an account of was fast slipping away, wasted by him for dinners and wine suppers at Delmonicos, costing thousands of dollars. Dinners to actors, actresses, and singers; flowers in winter, costing immense sums, sent to singers; theatre parties, which I never accompanied him to, with the exception of one or two, the first few years of our marriage. After the theatre, suppers, lasting until the morn-

ing broke, and where the best of foreign wines were drank as freely as water.

"He never pretended to practice his profession; he never visited a poor, sick man or woman to prescribe for them, or give them medicine. With his profession, his fine gifts, and my fortune at his back, what a field he had in which to do good; what a place, and a name he might have made for himself. But no, after his night's frolic he would sleep until noon the next day.

"In the meantime my own pursuits were of an entirely different nature; I always had a great love of study, read and thought much. I became deeply interested in the old religions, and read all the books I could find upon the subject, but particularly Buddhism. I was reared a Methodist, but my father, who was in every sense a Christian, a thinker, and of broad views, influenced my life greatly. I tried by every means in my power to lead my husband up with me. I plead with him to turn away from his follies, and seek a better way, a more manly and useful life. All round him were hundreds and thousands of the poor, hungry, sick, and dying, in this great City of New York, while he wasted his manhood, his talents, which he must give an account of, and lived only to gratify his appetites to eat, drink, and sleep.

"But my pleading was of no avail; indeed, he looked upon my talks, my reading, my spiritual philosophy, as the ravings of a deranged mind. But he never interfered with me so long as I supplied him with plenty of money.

"When I found what a hole he was making in my fortune, and began to remonstrate with him, and draw in my purse strings, then my cup which was full before, began to flow over. Before I brought myself to stand the ordeal, I found, and had proof, that he was lavishing my money on an actress here in New York City. You must not think I did not suffer, I had not reached that calm spiritual place where I now tread. I loved my husband dearly, and had my woman's pride, the pride of my father, the daughter of an old line of ancestors, holding the most conspicuous places in the law,

the pulpit, and government of our country. All my sensibilities, my great love was outraged, humiliated, and dragged in the dust. I told him that while my home (we then lived in my father's downtown house on Fifth Avenue, near Central Park, it is my old home), would be his always, and I would remain his friend, and his reform, to a natural, moral, manly life, would be the dearest wish of my heart. While I was still his wife, and would consider myself always his wife, as I did not believe in divorces, indeed the very idea was obnoxious to me, but so long as we both lived, we could never again have any relationship as man and wife. Henceforth we must live apart, while under the same roof.

"With a heart bruised, lacerated, and broken, I told him this, and plucked my ideal, and idol from my breast. The man I gave this hand to at the altar, my own father a witness to the promises he made, 'To love, honor, and cherish me, until death us do part.' His father officiated at the ceremony. Then began a system of persecution unheard of; he threatened me with divorce, and when he found I left that entirely to himself, he told all his friends I was insane. I will say here, he had many friends of his own kind, and a certain standing with the men of his own profession, for he was gifted, and had a pleasing, fascinating way, and much subtlety, which afterwards developed an unscrupulousness in carrying out any scheme that was for his own benefit and interest.

"He would every few days invite gentlemen to dinner, and ask me to preside at the table as usual. I would answer him, I am perfectly willing to do anything to please you so long as it will not compromise my dignity, and your guests are gentlemen. Suffice it to say, all he brought were physicians. It never entered my head, or did I dream of what he was plotting, or I would have informed my own doctor, and had him to watch me. In the interim, a maid of mine, a companion from childhood, and also a dear and trusted friend died. She came to my father's house to take charge of me when I was six years old, and she eighteen;

she was an orphan girl. Her death, and the trouble with my husband threw me into great prostration, and a lingering fever which lasted nearly three months. My physician, Doctor L. attended me; even then it never occurred to me to inform him of my danger, and what my husband had repeatedly accused me of, or acquaint my attorney, who would have seen immediately into the whole scheme, and whither things were drifting. She paused a moment, and calmly raised her hand and smoothed back her hair.

"I will not go into detail here," she continued, "it is enough to say that as I was recovering from this illness, one night about one o'clock, my husband came to my room; my maid, who had not been with me but a short while, slept in the room off mine. On retiring she had forgotten to lock my door, whether intentionally or not was never learned. My husband was dressed for the street; he had on a light overcoat, and carried his hat in his hand; in a few seconds there appeared two doctors, one of them whose name is prominent in nervous diseases; also a strange woman, a nurse from the private asylum where I was already doomed for.

"'Why, Walter,' I cried, rising upon my elbow in the bed, 'what is the matter? have you gone mad?'"

"'Margaret, my love, my poor stricken wife, these kind friends have come to take you where you will have the best of care, and medical treatment, and dear, your poor grief-stricken husband hopes you will soon recover.'"

"'My husband have you come like a thief in the night, armed with these ruffians to kidnap me? Have you fallen so low that you will resort to villainy like this? Oh, my God! is this the man, into whose keeping and protection my father gave me at the altar? this after all my kindness to him. I called to my maid, but no answer came. I was compelled to rise from my bed before the strange men. I made a rush to ring for my coachman, and an old faithful butler; one of the bells in my room connected with their rooms in our stable, but I was caught, and held by my husband; the other men stood mutely by. He held me until the woman he

brought with him dressed me. I was then bundled up in a cloak, carried down stairs, and out to the street, and placed in a covered carriage.

" As I was being carried out I observed two police officers standing in the vestibule. I knew then it was useless to say a word, or make a noise. I might scream, and scream, those who would come to my rescue would be told by my husband I was insane. I saw everything had been prearranged. Doctor Deveraux was considered very rich; few knew that I married him a poor man, and that from the day he became my husband, until that moment, he had never earned a dollar, or contributed one cent to his own or my support, but squandered nearly half my fortune on himself and strange women, his mistresses. I was driven to a private insane asylum; when we arrived there I was taken to one of the wards and given a small, meanly furnished room. When I found myself behind locks, keys, and the iron bars of a prison for the first time in years, I bent the knee in prayer.

" Then all my knowledge of Confucius, Zoroaster, and their philosophy, Brahmanism and Buddhism, brought no comfort, no hope, or help, or healing balm to the storm that surged, and raged in heart and soul. My idols were fallen, shattered; they were but images stuffed with human frailties. This was my Gethsemane, and my husband the Judas Iscariot, like my Master, Iscariot had to do his work before I entered Gethsemane, but unlike Him, I was not prepared to find Judas Iscariot my husband. Ah, my blessed Lord, this was the agony that wrung my soul, this was the bitter cup. At last the words of our own Bible came to me, the words of the New Testament of Jesus the Christ were whispered in my ear, ' Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.' They are equal to any words the Master spoke, when we come to think of the time and condition of the human race, and the masses.

“They came like the balm of Gilead to my crushed and bleeding heart, and with them came light, faith, comfort, and rest. When one of the attendants came and ordered me to bed, I told her I wished to be left alone to pray; I did not rise from my knees until the dawn stole over the hills, and lifted the darkness from the earth, and when I did, like Madame Guyon, prison locks, keys and bonds had no terror for me. Suffice it to say, I was left there two years; to say that my intelligence, heart, and soul didn’t rise up in wrath against the wrongs, abuses, cruelties, and indignities, heaped upon myself, and others as sane as myself, and the poor afflicted insane, would not be to speak true. Like the apostle Paul, they were the thorn in the flesh that I strove against daily, and like him I was given grace to bear it.

“I will not name the institution I was incarcerated in, but my spirit cries hourly, my God, when wilt thou break down the doors, and tear away the walls of these prisons, under the guise of institutions and asylums for the insane, and expose their nefarious work, and show the people what is carried on under the protection of the stars and stripes, the emblem of freedom.

“During my incarceration my husband tried by every means to get full control of my fortune, but father so arranged his will, that not a cent of the principal could he touch. In the law he was my husband, protector, and guardian, and he tried to have all my rents, interests on bonds and stocks, paid over to him, but he met with a foe in my attorney, who suspected foul play from the first. He had the State to suspend judgment until I was produced, brought before the courts and proven insane. Lucky for me I had such a friend in my attorney; he fought the enemy in every attempt he made, until at last, he tried to bribe him, but he failed in this. Dr. Deveraux kept the name of the institution from him for nearly a year after, when my attorney threatened him, he must either go to prison or produce me in court, dead or alive.

“And it was through his untiring efforts that I was given my liberty. After my release from prison, I

allowed Dr. Devereaux an income enough to keep him comfortable, but I never allowed him to enter the door of my house again. I also ordered my attorney to bring suit for a legal separation, so as to protect my person and my estate. I was not divorced, but God has a way of his own; He is not deaf to those who trust Him; He is the great Judge, from His tribunal is issued the only legal divorce, death.

“ Not long after my legal separation from my husband was granted me, I was sent for by Dr. Devereaux to go to his hotel, he was dying. He had been sick but three days. I took my maid and my butler, who had lived with us from the time I was a girl. I hurried as fast as my horses and carriage could carry me, my butler riding on the box with my coachman. When I reached the hotel, my butler and maid remained outside his room, while I went in. The doctor was lying with his face to the wall. I approached the bed noiselessly and bent over him, and called ‘Walter,’ he turned to me, opened his eyes, but did not recognize me. I must have been in his mind, and causing him great distress, for he kept repeating my name. I bent lower, and called, ‘Walter, dear Walter,’ again, which seemed to rouse him to consciousness. ‘ Oh, Margaret, is it you, at last,’ he said in a voice scarcely above a whisper. ‘ I knew if the message arrived in time you would come. Oh, my poor bruised and hurt wife; you are still my wife. Oh, Margaret, forgive me! forgive me! Ah God, I was so blind; I see all my folly now; I fell so low, I was the one who was mad, not you. I have broken your heart, and dragged my own noble father’s name in the dust and mire, and smeared it with disgrace. Thank God He spared me until you came. Forgive me Margaret, my wife, forgive me and pray for me.’

“ This was all he was permitted to say. I laid his head upon my bosom, and prayed that these words of his, his petition for pardon, might reach the throne of the Master before his spirit, and as I freely forgave this poor, erring, unfortunate man, the husband of my youth who had stifled his fine gifts, his usefulness, with the sinful pleasures of the world, He would show mercy also.

So he died in my arms, forgiven by me, and I hope by His God.

“ I have gone over this part of my life, not in detail, but rather skimmed it, so as to show you that I have not reached my present plane without paying the price, without drinking of the bitter cup. Yes, before we can climb to the mountain tops, we must first enter in; you recollect where the mother of Zebedee’s children, who were James and John, came to the Saviour, and said, ‘ Lord when thou comest into thy kingdom wilt thou seat my sons, one on thy right, and the other on thy left.’ And He answered and said, ‘ If thou art willing to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.’ And she answered, ‘ We are willing.’

“ This is the difference between the Christian religion, and the Christians’ Christ, and the old religions, the Jewish, Brahmanism, Buddhism. It is an improvement on the others, for they leave you to struggle on up the mountain steps, naked and alone to reach what? The God, in yourself, or nothing. But with the seal of the Holy Spirit stamped upon the brow, His witness in our heart, there is no measuring the width, and breadth, the heights, and depths, and the possibilities of this glorious life. We never begin to grow until we enter in, or receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of fire, unless we have passed through Gethsemane. The old man, and I will add the old woman, for I think there is a female, as well as a male, must die in us. ‘ The ax must be laid to the root of the tree.’

“ When I came out from my two years’ imprisonment, I left behind me all former things which I used to think necessary to my dignity, social position, and happiness. Old habits, desires, vanities; while never a weak or frivolous woman, and I claim to have always been imbued with good sense, and the highest of principles, and standard of morals, yet I had great family pride, pride of wealth and position, and enjoyed the respect and admiration the world pays to these, knowing all the while it was not myself personally it honored, but the above things. Yet I own to my weakness, and being

hampered by it and them. But they all fell away in the institute, one by one I shed them, like one does old worn garments, and customs that for years have weighted down body and soul, and I came out clothed anew, a free woman in Christ Jesus.

“ When He said to the rich young man, ‘ Go sell all thou hast, and take up thy cross and follow Me,’ it was not because he was rich, so much, but he had his heart in his riches. When I came out of my two years’ prison, all my wealth, time, talents, body and soul was laid at His feet; it was His henceforth. And since, oh, blessed Lord Christ, what freedom!” she rose from her chair, with her hands clasped upon her bosom, and began to walk up and down the floor. She looked like the Greek Iphigenia, the beautiful priestess in her white, floating drapery, a messenger of hidden truths, yet old as the New Testament.

“ Freedom,” she reiterated, “ the bird on the wing with its throat full of song of a spring morning, is not more free; the eagle when soaring high up in the blue expanse, treads but the earth in comparison to the feeling of freedom of the body, and the soaring of the soul, when touched by the Holy Spirit. This body of ours is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and it cannot dwell in us if we are in sin, if we do not keep it clean, sweet, and pure. When in sin the body is dead, the soul is dead, the spirit which is life, cannot touch it, will not touch it. When we cease to sin and are repentant, the spirit comes and gives us life. ‘ I came that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly,’ ‘ I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ Oh wonderful words, ‘ The way, the truth, and the life,’ what more do we want.

“ Oh, blessed Saviour, Lord, Thou art the way, Thou art the lamp to the feet, throwing out Thy light at every step, brighter, and brighter it grows, and when we have scaled the mountain peaks, on it shines, casting its effulgence, and showing us other and higher mountain tops. But there are resting places, valleys green, and refreshing, where fountains of pure living water flow, where we can drink deeply, then mount again, onward, upward,

higher, and higher, brighter, and brighter shines the light. Oh, blessed Lord Christ, Thou art the inexhaustible ideal. I thank Thee that Thou did'st cut my shackles, loosed my chains, and made me free. Touched my soul with Thy living fire of life and sent me forth to gather in the lost sheep of the house of Israel; gather them into the fold. Thy poor lost children. I have no children of my own, but Thou hast given me these children of men, the poor outcast children, who are famishing for a taste of Thy peace, rest, and joy."

I rose from my seat, and crossed to the middle of the room where she stood with her head thrown back, her hands folded on her bosom, and knelt down upon one knee, "Oh, my Lady," I cried, "let me be your pupil; teach me this way, the way to this wonderful life. Lead me, so that some day I may be considered worthy to enter in. That I may have some of this peace, rest, and joy in my heart. That I may be given some of this spiritual power."

"Oh, my son, rise," she said, laying her hand on my head, and I felt something as if an electric spark of virtue and new life had gone all through me, "take your seat; don't mistake me, or rather don't be mistaken;" she seated herself on the same chair she occupied before. "This way is not a bed of roses; like the rich young man in the gospel, it means to leave all, take up thy cross and follow Him. There are ups and downs, things to be striven for, things to battle against, self to annihilate. So long as we live in this world, so long as we are surrounded by thousands, and tens of thousands living in the flesh, slaves to the passions, the unseen powers, and principalities of darkness, which Paul the apostle speaks of, like him we must fight the good fight, and bring others unto salvation, so that they also may enter into this peace, rest, and power; we must keep Christ's commands, 'To watch and pray, lest ye fall into temptation, to watch ye alway.' My dear son, I call you son, I am not old enough in years to be your mother, but let me act that part, I like it better than sister. Our blessed Lord created men and women with sense, and reasoning power, and we must use it in this

case; good common sense, lest we fall into error. Happiness lies in employing our time, talents, and money, it isn't necessary to have money to do good, but we must use all our gifts judiciously, helping humanity, by lifting it up and teaching it to love the good, the beautiful, and the true, and if they love these they will love the very embodiment of these three Christ Jesus.

“ You are a student of humanity. The greatest study of all studies and sciences is man; and how to benefit the human race. You are a reformer in the same direction that I myself am following in, you are but a novice as yet, ‘ Ask, and you shall receive, Seek, and you shall find, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.’ If you do not seek, you will not find, go on seeking, watching and praying, climbing higher, and higher, and some day you will be called upon, and the bitter cup will be offered to you, then if you are able and willing to say, ‘ Father, not my will, but thine be done,’ you will have conquered the old man, will have slayed him, you will receive the baptism of fire, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, then you will be able to cross the threshold, and fear not its guardian, who stands watch with flaming wings and sword. Then and not until then, will you get a taste of that spiritual heaven our Lord taught us of while here on earth.”

“ Oh, my Lady,” she looked at me and smiled, “ permit me Madame Deveraux, to address you as my Lady when we are alone. My Lady is the name I gave you, before I learned your real name.” She smiled upon me again, graciously. “ While you believe that Christ was the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, and the Saviour of men, I should judge from those beautiful Christian truths you have just now spoken, that you have not confined yourself to any particular creed.”

“ Only so far as Christ's teachings, and being saved through Him. I believe in attending some church, whatever one suits our own individual needs best, and helping to support it for they all do good. What would this city, or any other large city or town be without churches; why people would sink into the lowest state of debauchery and crime, we would have a reign of ter-

ror, and soon the sun would set in darkness upon the earth so far as man was concerned. But so far as the great principles of Christianity, men might as well try to take the wisdom of the Godhead, and hold it in the hollow of their hand, as to try to narrow the wonderful life, and beautiful teachings of Christ to a creed."

"Oh, my Lady, what you say is my belief, it's the creeds, which make all the trouble in the world. If all men were brothers in Christ, as Christ taught the brotherhood of men, and He Himself their elder brother. If men would seek after the Christ heart, and they were all united in His great principles, oh, what a revolution, what a rooting out of selfishness, what an uplifting of the human race, we would then have Christ's kingdom on earth. No one would be rich, and no one poor, all men would be of one mind in Christ; and no evil could withstand their power. It is ecclesiasticism, and doctrinaires, not meaningly, have rather retarded than furthered the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth. But there is hope that in the future we will have more of Christian primitive simplicity with the advanced understanding of its high spirituality. As you just now said, Christ is the lamp to our feet, the inexhaustible ideal."

CHAPTER VIII.

OMPHALE.

With this the door bell rang, and in a few seconds Mrs. Marstan with Cyrus Alvin was ushered in. My Lady rose and received him with great warmth, an expression of delight overspread her face as she held out her hand to him and said, "I did not know you were in New York, but Philadelphia is only a few hours' ride from it, and one can easily run up. I am so pleased to

see you, so pleased to know that you thought enough of us to stop over and come out with Katherine."

" Could I do otherwise? Do you think Paul, the apostle, would have passed through Philippi, without stopping at the house of Lydia, who ministered unto him in her own home when he first came as a stranger to her city. I think the sweetest of all friendship and love, is the friendship and love of the children of the spirit," and he bowed graciously before her as he took her hand.

" Let me introduce you Dr. Alvin, to my young friend Mr. Osgood, he is one of us," she said turning to me.

The deep bright gray eyes flashed a glance into mine, then a smile lighted up his face as our hands clasped, and he exclaimed in a low voice:

" Beverly, I am really glad to see you. How long have you been in New York?"

" Since July," I answered, " and I am as pleased to see you as my Lady. It is several years since I had the pleasure of hearing your voice."

" Then you and Mr. Osgood are old acquaintances! how nice," said my Lady.

" Oh, I take the credit of first discovering Beverly Osgood. About ten years ago he came to hear me preach every Sunday for about a year, when I left the church to go out as an evangelist. Like a good many other boys of his guild, he came out of curiosity, but in the weeks that went by we had many short talks, and every time like the rich young man in the gospel, he went away sorrowful indeed, for at that time he was heir to much wealth. But he has since proved that my teaching was not lost on him. I think the same of the young man in the gospel, although there is no more mention made of him in the scriptures, yet I cannot but believe, when he returned to his vast possessions, and in the quiet of his Oriental palace, the Saviour's words must have troubled him, must have sunk deep into his heart, and he came to understand that his wealth was not his; he was but simply the steward of his Master, and he must use it for his Master's glory. But my friend Beverly has more of a penchant for social reform and

politics, he takes to them like a duck does to water. Well he has a great wide field to work in."

Cyrus Alvin had just finished a four weeks' revival, in one of the large churches in Philadelphia, where he had stirred the old Quaker city to its foundation with his preaching and impassioned eloquence. He had struck their conservatism, and flabby apathy into something like life, and the people packed the church nightly. There were many of the ministers of the rich and fashionable churches, and their followers who resented his teaching, and termed him a fanatic. But the great masses, ever hungry, ever thirsting for the food to make their burdens easier to bear, and as was said of our Lord, "The common people heard him gladly." And like Christ whom he preached and followed closer than any man I ever knew, he was a man of multitudes.

He was from my own city, but a Southerner by birth and education. As he stated, I heard him preach ten years before, when the pastor of a large, and flourishing Methodist church, which he resigned to go out as an evangelist. I was but a boy then, twenty years old, and I owed him a great deal. He settled forever many doubts and questions which disturbed my mind, and also stirred up others which led me to seek and to find, to knock, and to ask. As I have made him a leading character in another as yet unpublished work, I will give but a slight sketch of him here. I had not seen him for nearly four years; the wear and tear of travel, and constant preaching, had seared a face, pale, refined, and of great intellectual beauty, and made dark lines under the deepset gray eyes, which glowed and burned with the fire of the enthusiast. Although but a few years over forty, his dark curling brown hair was streaked with gray, and one thin lock lay upon a forehead, ideal. His straight slight figure had grown sparser, but it had lost none of its sinewy grace, and the courtesy and delicacy of manner, which he bore to the opposite sex, and which made him a favorite, and loved by all woman kind.

Mrs. Marstan wore the same dress as the first night I met her at the Tombs. After she had divested herself

of her wraps, she came over to where we were standing, her face all puckered into smiles, so that her eyes looked like two bright specks of blue, shining out from the layers of flesh seams, which overshadowed them. "I am rejoiced to see you," she said, reaching out her hand to me, and her whole attitude bespoke that she thought me one snatched from the world of sin, and Madame Deveraux, the victor of the prize, for she fairly beamed upon myself and Cyrus Alvin, as she looked from one to the other.

"It is so good to know that you and Dr. Alvin are old friends, and met here at Madame's house; just think of it. I'm so sorry he is not going to stay in New York, but he is to come back in the spring, then we will have some awakening of the dead in the Sodom by the sea."

After we had been seated a few moments in pleasant chat, Madame Deveraux rose and left the room.

"Then your home, Mr. Osgood, is not in New York, but West; the same place where Dr. Alvin is from. Do you live in a village or city?" asked Katherine.

"My home is in a large city," I answered.

"Is it as wicked as New York City?" she queried innocently.

"Well, according to the population, it has it's share of wickedness and goodness also. We have not such a mixture of people; there is not so much crowding, nor have we so much refined vice."

"Ah, I understand," she replied, shaking her head thoughtfully, and her face wore no puckers.

"We have a number of very good people in New York City, very charitable, and clever people."

"A city of over a million population, the metropolis of the great Republic of America, the center of immense wealth should be also the center of art, literature, science, religion and culture in general," I responded. Here the maid who had opened the door for me made her appearance, and said:

"Madame Deveraux requested the gentlemen and Mrs. Marstan to step into the dining-room."

Cyrus Alvin and myself followed after Mrs. Marstan and the maid to a large, spacious room at the end of the

hall. It was the same shape as the library which we had just left, only it had a wide bay window at the end which looked West, breaking the squareness, and giving length to the room. The bay window had three large windows which reached from floor to ceiling, and opened out upon a porch. They were draped in white muslin curtains, making a delicate contrast to the walls of brownish gray mixed with golden hues. A large old-fashioned mahogany sideboard, with a white marble top, a mirror, and shelves filled with pieces of solid silver, stood in a wide space of wall between the mantelpiece and bay window. The mantelpiece was also mahogany, built high with mirror and shelves, strewn with bits of rare china, and other ornaments. A large bronze clock, mounted by tall bronze figures, gave out a deep, steady beat of bell-like tones. The floor was of dark polished wood, with rich, soft rugs laid here and there, and in the center stood a massive dining-table, spread with a cloth of white linen damask, and set with dishes of delicate French china.

While the maid was busy placing the viands on the table, and Cyrus Alvin was speaking with Mrs. Marstan, I walked over to one of the windows which was open, and stepped out upon a wide circular porch which overlooked a hill and the Hudson.

The hill sloped down to the bank of the river, and was studded with magnificent oaks, maples, and great beeches, and through the interstices of their branches shone its blue rippling water, its many lights dotting the shore like fairy lamps rising out of its shadowy surface. Here and there under the trees was a yacht, anchored in full sail, looking like some white-winged angel, sent to keep watch over the steamers, schooners, sloops, and other craft which pass and repass in the night. To my left was the city spread out as it were at my feet, the great Babylon, with its tall flat-roofed houses, its thousands of lighted windows, and tens of thousands of flickering electric flames, and its harsh noises coming softened by distances to the ear. Then the nearer and more musical sounds of nature, the soft murmur of the trees as the cool, perfumed winds stirred their leaves, to

sing sweet lullabys. The low swish and swash of the river, as a silent white sail stole phantom-like over its waves, leaving its dips and ripples in its swells. All this crowned by the sweep of the purple gemmed sky overhead.

“Oh, the beautiful deep fathomless heavens,” said a voice at my side, it was my Lady’s who had slipped out unobserved after me, “Oh, mysterious night, how I love you.”

“Do you love the night? I do.”

“Do I love the nights?” she repeated, “when a girl, I almost hated myself for being one, because I was debarred from enjoying the night in my own way. When I became of age, eighteen, I was launched into society, I must go to balls and parties, and return them, this is the social code. I could be up all night, and every night, in that prescribed way. But to have freedom, to enjoy my thoughts to prowl about and see things, see its beauty, its life, to study the stars and planets, to learn its lessons, its mysteries, and listen to its thousands of different voices, for the night has its own peculiar life. How I longed for a taste of this life, why I was almost starved, my spirit fretted and chafed under the restraint. But blessed freedom, how I love and enjoy every moment of my liberty now. You don’t know the delightful hours, and half hours, I have alone here on this porch, before I set out for my night rambles. I come out here in the dusk, and have an hour or so of quiet contemplation and rest, while my eyes, and my ears, and heart are fed. Then I go forth to war with satan, sin, and darkness,” and my Lady laughed heartily.

“Glory,” cried Cyrus Alvin, who had come out unperceived, and stood to the right of my Lady, his slight straight figure, his small beautifully shaped head, his pale face standing out in the violet twilight of the night. “Glory!” he cried again, his eyes flashing like stars of electric flame in the darkness, “everything grand and beautiful in nature is God’s gift to man.”

“Come, you must both be hungry,” said my Lady, and we followed her into the dining-room. She assigned Cyrus Alvin to a seat at the head of the table, and my-

self to one to his right, then the maid came in telling her the water was boiling for the tea. My Lady went into a pantry, in a few moments she returned carrying a silver teapot in her hand. "I always make the tea myself, it's a whim of mine," she said smiling, and taking a seat opposite to me between Katherine and Cyrus Alvin. "Katherine knows how fond I am of a good cup of tea; I don't mean to hint that Minnette can't make good tea," and she gave Minnette, who was passing slices of lovely looking homemade white bread, a winsome smile. We had also cold sliced tongue, dishes of large yellow peaches, which I knew were home-brewed before Madame informed us that they were put up in glass jars by her cook, who had been in her service nearly twelve years. There was two kinds of cake, crackers, thin as wafers, and charlotte russe, with fruit and cream.

And dear reader, such a cup of tea, flavored with loaf sugar and yellow cream, was never my lot to drink before; it looked like amber as it came out of the long silver spout, and it was a drink fit for the gods. As I have a penchant for tea and coffee I can testify to it, and Cyrus Alvin who was an ascetic, loved a cup of tea, and no Greek in the old classic days, loved the fruits of the trees better than he, so he paid Madame delicate compliments on her tea and luscious peaches. During the repast we had a delightful chat; my Lady asked me if I had ever heard Dr. Parkhurst preach.

"On my last visit to the city four years before," I replied.

"Come to think of it he has been in Europe all summer, and has not returned yet."

"What do you think of his work with the Lexow Committee exposing all this crime. Has he done any good?" I asked, more to hear her opinion than to give my own.

"In a sense, yes, and in a sense, no. Dr. Parkhurst meant well, and his efforts in what he did are commendable. The Lexow Committee was a good thing, it exposed one of the most inhuman conditions of corruption, tyranny, and extortion men could be guilty of. Think

of a great city like New York calling itself Christian, at least it has all the advantages of Christian civilization, of its teaching, its free schools, its churches, and all thrown open to whoever may wish to avail themselves of their benefit. Think of its citizens sitting down, and leaving its government and control to such men as were brought before the Lexow board. But it's one thing to expose, and another to reform. Had the Lexow Committee followed up the law breakers, and punished them severely, and kept its system going with untiring vigilance, had they made just laws, laws that would reach men as well as women, and not thrown the poor outcasts entirely into the hands of the police, who revenge themselves upon these creatures because they are prohibited now from extorting money as formerly, had the Lexow Committee done this, it would have done some good, but when did ever a body of men make just laws for women?

“ It's all well enough for them while the men hug, and lavish money and luxuries on their pampered darlings, and of course we know many of these pampered darlings are lost to all principle, versed in cunning, deceit, and subtle as cats; that they can cope with their lovers in everything; that they are apt pupils, and by these accomplishments they hold them where more honest women couldn't. These women remain in this condition and go on down, down, and grow harder and harder in crime, they are never reached, never converted, they pile up money while the men who lavished it on them have gone down to the slums, such men as you meet on Seventh Avenue.”

“ It is the women who drink and dissipate, who have feelings of remorse and shame,” said Mrs. Marstan, “ they drink to drown their troubles, and there is more chance of reforming them.

“ Katherine is no admirer of Dr. Parkhurst,” said my Lady. “ I think him a unique figure, something of a Carlyle, he has his niche in the world, a man of strong characteristics, trying to scale the mountain peaks. In a sense, a worldling like nearly all our New York

preachers; I do not mean by that, that he is not of the highest morals and of impeachable life."

"It is only the men and women who preach Christ and live Christ, can bring sinners to repentance; and especially poor lost women," said Cyrus Alvin laying down the dish in which he had just finished disposing of his peaches. "I claim a little more experience with that class and the masses in general, than Madame Deveraux, and Mrs. Marstan in my twenty years of ministry. To make laws for the prevention of vice is all well enough, but it never cured vice. There is a law of death for the murderer, but it does not prevent men, and sometimes women from committing murder. There is a law against stealing, but the thief steals whenever he or she finds a chance. And we see theft, perjury, murder, are everyday occurrences, and the constant breaking of the ten commandments is not stopped by law, but by conversion, grace, and the purifying of the heart. I admire Dr. Parkhurst greatly; he is a man of strong individual character, and intellectually the peer of many of his brothers, and he is to be honored for the reform he has tried to make in the face of so much opposition. But he is like many more in the ministry, he is trying to scale the mountain summits with a crooked back, lame and sore feet, and a staff in his hand, and a halter around his neck.

"When, if he would shake off the halter, with head erect, shoulders thrown back, hands and feet free as the air, he could ascend with bounds, carrying multitudes with him. The reason of this halt and staggering is that they hold out the right hand to God, and the left hand to the world, this quenches the Holy Spirit, and stays the power of the church to draw the hearts of the people to God. God's church must be aggressive, the moment it compromises with the world, the flesh, and the devil, it loses its mission, and materialism becomes dominant, and like a fungus growth stifles the spiritual, and the church becomes lame and crippled. This is the reason it does so little in arresting the awful sin broadcast in the world. The Holy Spirit which proceedeth from the Father, is in a sense

Christ the Lord, for He said, ' If I do not go away, the comforter will not come.' The God of the Universe incarnated in His man's body, which had to die that He might rise again and show us the resurrection, and ascend to His Father that He might come in spirit. ' I am the Life,' He said, ' without Me ye can do nothing.' The Holy Spirit is the life of the church, the life of the soul, it will not dwell in a carnal mind, neither does the dove ever light on a dead carcass.

" Men like Parkhurst, with their great ability and resources for good, go on beating at the stone walls of mens' hearts, hammering away at iron black and cold, when we know the only way to make it malleable is to heat it red-hot, and that there is no process to take the dross from metals, but by the furnace fire. They call me a fanatic, mad, a fit subject for a lunatic asylum because I preach ' the second blessing,' a second work of grace done in the soul, the baptism of fire, and that men and women can live in this life without sin, that inbred sin can be burnt out of them, that peace, rest, joy, and happiness can be our portion here. We talk of mystery aside from the mystery of life, the greatest mystery to me is sin, sin is body sickness, soul sickness, leprosy, ugliness, paralysis, death." He raised his thin, white nervous hand to his head, and brushed back the stray curls from his forehead. He was pale almost to whiteness, and I could liken his face to nothing but a fine cut cameo, thrown out against the dark-brown gray of the wall, yet with its fineness it had lines of strength and character. But the deep-set, restless, burning eyes flashed here and there, and they seemed to me even in that room to be soul hunting; for the Master certainly had made Cyrus Alvin a fisher of men.

Madame Deveraux sat like one entranced, and her beautiful eyes which never left his face, caught some of the fire and glow of his, and her soul seemed to leap out and up, and clasp this man's and ascend with him. Mrs. Marstan's face was all puckers, and her eyes, well I could see nothing but two little round holes, that shot out thread-like beams of dancing blue flame, and every second or so while Cyrus spoke, she would lay one hand

in the other, look at me, shake her head, and murmur, "Bless the Lord."

"Yes, speaking of these poor women," he continued, turning in his chair, "reminds me of a wonderful conversion I had when holding a series of meetings in San Francisco, California. It was one evening I had been preaching every day and night for two weeks, the church was densely crowded; I had observed during the time, a tall, handsome woman of thirty-five years, or along there, elegantly dressed, and showing in her style and air that she was a woman of the world, a courtesan. She came every evening and took a seat near the altar. On this night, I had preached a good sermon, I felt the Holy Spirit descending in great power and doing its work. I had just finished my sermon when I saw this woman rise, she took off her hat, and unfastened a heavy gold chain from about her neck, also a gold watch, her fingers were loaded with diamond rings, she pulled them off and brought them all up to where I was standing, and flung them at my feet, saying, 'Sell them, and give the money to the poor,' she then knelt down and began to weep and sob; it was fully a quarter of an hour before we could soothe her. After she became quiet, some lady workers in the church with myself, saw her to her carriage, in which she drove to the meetings every evening. Before she left, she asked me when and where she could have a talk with me. I told her to come in the morning about half an hour before the service began, which she did. I found her an intelligent businesslike woman, and from her conversation I learned she was rich, had made money in mining stocks. She was very repentant, and left me to go back to her large and elegant house, which she afterwards gave up for a home for repentant women of her own class. Before I left San Francisco I called upon her, and as I took my leave she placed in my hand a check for a thousand dollars, to be used for the same purpose she was then making her house ready for; when I reached my own city, I turned the check over to the mission board. Her conversion created a great excitement in the press, and among the men in general,

for she was well-known among the fast set, the demi-monde of the gay metropolis of the coast, as she was rich, handsome, intelligent, and shrewd. Many said it would not be six months before 'Omphale,' the name she went by, but her real name was Charlotte Dongal, would buy her another establishment and be back again in the old life. But it is seven years since then, and Omphale is still climbing the ladder, higher and higher, she is a tireless worker, and has rescued hundreds of her sisters, from the wine and card tables, the midnight revels, then the streets, then prison and death; few grow rich like Omphale, few have her sense and brain. Glory," he shouted as we rose from the table, and we went back to the sitting-room, where my Lady seated herself at the piano, and played several fine classical pieces. I found her a most accomplished musician, after singing one or two arias from the different operas, she sang the lovely hymn, "I need thee, Oh, I need thee every hour," Katherine with a splendid contralto, joining in, also Cyrus Alvin, who had a fine tenor voice; it was like a lute, and people said he hypnotized sinners with it. When she finished, I made the request to play something on her violin, which I saw lying on the piano. Mrs. Marstan clapped her hands, gave a tilt to the top knob of her hair, pushed the straggling hairs from her forehead, looked at me with such an expression on her face. Naturally in repose it was broad, smooth, fresh, and fair, but it was now all gathered up until the flesh lay in seams, covering her eyes, which looked like two blue beads emitting electric sparks of light, as Madame took up her violin and drew the bow across the strings by way of tuning it up a little. Then began one of those Italian phantasies which Ole Bull might have executed in his best days.

"Oh, fair Italy, land of poetry and song, have you, too, become dumb with the dumbness of our century? Has the lifeblood of your people run cold, dried in their veins? Have your lyres, been thrown aside, and the strings of your lutes and harps been broken, and all that is sweetest, dearest, and loveliest to the children of men, the songs and outpourings of the heart, silenced

by the cold, pitiless modernism and materialism, the worship of the golden calf? But my Lady played on, and the sweet melody and pathos at times pierced my heart, then again lifted me up to regions of bliss where the saints dwell. When she finished, she sang again the hymn with the violin accompaniment, "I need thee, oh, I need thee every hour."

A little later I took my departure. Mrs. Marstan was to remain all night, also Cyrus Alvin, who was to leave in the morning for the West. My Lady invited me to call often, to come any night I wished to go with herself and Katherine to the slums, and as it was quite a distance to the park, to call at the home downtown, and she would meet me there, and Mrs. Marstan would be there to receive me in her private parlor. I took the hand she held out to me at parting, and held it to my lips. "Oh, my Lady," I said, "let me henceforth be your pupil, your follower, let me help you in your good work." So I took leave of these three rare characters, as one star differeth from another in brightness, so did these three, but they were equally interesting.

But Madame Deveraux impressed me the most, she being a woman, so wonderful, and yet so essentially womanly, with all the softness, tenderness, and delicacy of the true woman. But after that came the priestess, the goddess, the intellect, character, strength, and spirituality. Just imagine you see the Venus of Milo who was the Greek embodiment of the highest attributes of intellectual womanhood. The majesty of form stripped of all sensuality, intellect stamping every feature, then add to this a soul, touched by the Holy Spirit, her whole body aglow with living life, eternal, and you have Margaret Deveraux.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

AND I WHISPER BACK, "HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME,
THE WORKS THAT I DO SHALL HE DO ALSO."

The first of September had arrived and with it came cool salt breezes, up from the wide ocean, wafting over the great city, and men and women, walked with quicker and more buoyant steps. The presidential campaign raged fierce and hot, all over the land, but more especially in the East, and more dominantly in New York City. Never since the civil war, was there such intense bitterness felt between political opponents. Before the war it was the South, fighting for her slaves, which were her labor, therefore her capital. Labor is capital. Now it is a few men, in New York City, fighting behind fortifications of gold dollars, gold interest bearing bonds, gold bonded mortgages. The war, with the South, was to free a million and over of negro slaves, the fight now is for gold, gold, gold, to put the yoke around men's necks, and to lay heavier burdens upon nearly fifty million of white serfs, created and brought into bondage, since the emancipation of the negro.

And the man going out of the president's chair, sang the golden song, and fought the golden fight, for four years, and the man coming in (for McKinley was sure to be President), for seventeen years in Congress sang silver's song, but the golden cup was offered him, and he too weak to resist quaffed the fluid, and drank to its dregs, and he cried, gold, gold, gold, give me the coveted prize, and I will divorce gold's wife, silver, debase her, raise the brazen bull higher, and set up his calf to worship. And the people cried, give us bread, and work, give us back the days of plenty, days before the civil

war, when every American workman was a freeman, and the days after the civil war, when money was plenty, and our silver dollar, stood side by side with the gold. So the campaign raged.

I had divined for some time that Nina had been thinking much, of her adopted mother, and brother, and of making herself known to them but how and in what way troubled her greatly, and caused her to put the matter off from day to day. This urged me to set about making arrangements for the long delayed meeting between herself, and Gene, sooner than I had planned to. I called on Bertram, and during our conversation I informed him of my intention to take Gene with me the following evening to her house. That I felt it my duty not only to relieve my own conscience, but the suffering of her mother, and her brother ; which I was sure Nina herself desired it, but had put it off so long, she did not know how to go about to undo the step she had taken of hiding herself, for years, from her only relatives, and the only two beings who had the mother, and the brother love for her.

At the first mention of bringing Nina and Gene together, Bertram's face darkened, and he seemed much disturbed. He bent his head, and thought a moment, a habit with him, when touched, or crossed in what in any way concerned him personally. Then he turned to me and said, " You're right Beverly, they should know that you have found her, have seen her, and spoken with her." Then after a pause, he added, " It would not be likely after what has happened, she would now care to marry this Gene."

" I am of your opinion, all is changed with her now."

I had written to Gene, to meet me at the Eighty-first Street station, for the purpose of paying a visit to the house of a friend of mine, from whom we might glean some information as to the one we were in search of. I could say no more at present, but it was necessary for him to accompany me. The next evening he was at the station promptly at the appointed time. " Now my dear fellow," I said, after our greeting, " you're to ask no questions, but follow me, I am to be pilot, to-night." I

saw that he gave an involuntary start, and sort of shiver ran over his whole frame.

"What is it?" he asked, his cheek paling, and catching hold of my hand, "have you any news of her, have you seen her?"

"My dear Gene, I request you not to ask questions, not to betray yourself in any way, but to listen attentively to what you hear." I said this so as to relieve his mind, of any expectation he might have of meeting Nina, and to turn his thoughts in another channel. Bertram had promised me he would not make his usual visit, on this evening, and I would be sure to find her at home, whether she would see me or not he could not say, as she reserved these off evenings for herself, but to go a little early, and try. She had been home but a few days from Long Branch, and was feeling somewhat tired after her journey.

We walked in silence until we reached Nina's residence. "Stop Mr. Osgood," said Gene, trembling, as I put my foot on the lower stone step, to ascend. All the color had left his face, he was as white as death, and his lips were blue, "I will go no farther until you tell me what kind of a house this is. I know it's grand looking, and this an aristocratic swell neighborhood, but that cuts no figure, in New York City, as regards respectability, I am better acquainted with this city, than you Mr. Osgood, and I don't care to have you fooled."

"My dear fellow this is a private house. I am acquainted with its mistress, she is of an old aristocratic family, a most respectable woman. She can help us more than any other person in the world, to find Nina. Come trust me Gene, I can do nothing if you don't have confidence in me."

"I have implicit faith in your honor, as a man, and a gentleman, but I don't want you to fall into a trap, Mr. Osgood. New York City is full of scheming, designing men, and women, that will do anything for money."

"Gene, my boy, I am not so green, trust, and follow me."

"All right Mr. Osgood, the woman can do us no harm, unless she plots to swindle you, besides I can fight for you, and myself too."

I looked at Gene, and laughed. "Dear, old fellow, you amuse me you think because my hands are small, and white, that they can't give a blow, why they have the grip of iron, and the hardness and strength of steel, besides I know just where to strike."

Samson, the black butler, answered my ring. "Yes sah," his mistress was at home. "Walk in sah, Madame da Countess is at dinna, now." He smiled upon me as he took my hat and cane, and eyes Gene keenly as he performed similar services for him. I then gave him my card, he looked towards Gene for his, but thinking of myself, I said, mine will answer for both. Gene took the hint, and said nothing, he then showed us into the drawing-room, and left us.

A bronze lamp of exquisite design and workmanship, burned low on the center table, in the library, leaving the long salon in a sort of dim twilight. Gene, seated himself, in a corner near one of the windows. He had not spoken since we entered the house, it seemed to me as if he were struck speechless, and out of all the shimmer and sheen of silken hangings, rich brocades, soft stuffs, laces like spider webs, draping the windows. Marble statuary, paintings, art, color, and perfumes, the dim flame of the lamp, under its silken shade, throwing over all a pinkish hue. Yes, out of his corner, out of the deep shadow, paramount to all rose the white face of Gene, stern, rigid, and looking as if hewn out of stone.

I don't know how long we sat, but neither spoke, and I myself, was laboring under strong emotion. It might have been ten minutes, and it might have been twenty, when I thought I heard a step, and the faint rustle of a woman's drapery. I don't think Gene heard anything, but the rattle of the passing vehicles, upon the stone-paved streets, and the echoes of the far away roar, and noise of the city. I rose and slipped back to the lower end corner, and threw myself into an armchair, which was partially hid behind the silken portière of the folding door, which separated the library from the grand salon; it was a real hiding place, no ray of light reached it. I had no sooner seated myself, than Nina's tall figure entered. She wore a simple trailing house dress, of sil-

very-gray serge, with touches of pink ribbon here and there, and belted in at the waist, with a pink ribbon sash. The coils of her luxuriant dark hair, were fastened high at the back of her head, by a comb of pearls. She wore no other ornaments, save the flashing, gleaming gems, which weighted her fingers. She stood a moment on the threshold of the door, the brighter light from the gas-jet, in the hall, making the room appear darker, and its objects less distinct. Then she advanced a step or two, catching but the outlines of a man's figure, sitting in the corner, and thinking it was myself, she started to cross the floor, when Gene jumped to his feet. I heard a low hoarse gurgle in his throat, then a cry, "Nina" holding out his arms, then they fell powerless at his side.

He was so overcome, stricken dumb, as it were, by the luxury, elegance, mingled with refinement, of her surroundings, the wonderful enhancement of her beauty, which had bloomed from the young girl, like a rosebud, when unfolding its leaves to the sun, comes forth in all its radiance of color, and perfume. Indeed he never dreamed of finding her thus. Then the joy, the delight, that she stood before him, real living and in the flesh. He held out his arms to her again, but a feeling of doubt as to what she was, as to the relationship existing between her and Roscoe Delano, cut him to the heart's quick and pierced his very soul; with his arms dropping weak and limp at his side, he stepped back a few paces from her.

She fell upon her knees on the floor, at his feet, with a low stifled cry. "Gene, dear Gene, have you come to rebuke me, to upbraid me, for my desertion of yourself and mother, for my long silence. How well you and she loved me,—ah, how well, no one knows better than I. How mother and you must have suffered, when I did not go home that night, and the days and weeks, went by, and passed into the months, and the months, into the years, and I did not return or make a sign that I lived. Oh, forgive me, forgive me Gene."

"With all my soul, Nina, I forgive," he cried and with arms outstretched, he made a step forward to throw

them about her, but she waived him away with her hand.

"I did not dare to go home, Gene, after what had happened at the store, that day, you know about it, you have heard of it long ago, appearances were against me. I was out the night before with Delano, and you know what followed the next morning, it was all a fiendish plot Gene, to ruin me, to bring me to what he wished to make of me. Although knowing myself, to be innocent of every charge and the slightest evil, I could not bear to face you and mother. I was humiliated Gene, struck to the earth, struck old, as with a blow, that hurts me to the soul, yet. I suffered Gene, from the thought, that you and mother would think I had been deceiving you both, living a life of deception. Oh, Gene, how I suffered, you will never know, no man can realize the hurt, the bruise to a woman's heart, and soul. The romance of my young life, had been killed, the earth was darkened, the sun blotted out. I could see nothing behind me or before me in the future, but blackness. I was maddened, crazed, all the woman in me had been outraged, by this pitiless man, and something entered into me, and I said, to myself, 'Roscoe Delano, you have shown me no pity, I will henceforth show you none.' I had made up my mind, what I intended to do and what it would cost me.

"I must sell my body to this man, and sell my soul to hell. Men can never know the hate that enters into a woman's heart, when they commit the cowardly act, of depriving her of her good name. When I left the room, where Delano had me carried after my faint, I wandered about the streets, fighting with myself, fighting with the step I was about to take, for my whole nature, while filled with revenge, recoiled against it; but at midnight, I found myself, in front of the very house Roscoe Delano, tried to make me enter the night before.

"And there under the great deep purple sky, under its troops of luminous shining stars and planets, under the eye of God, and the pitiful merciful Christ, I took an oath, to make him suffer. I offered my body as a

sacrifice, to be the instrument through which the man who wronged me must suffer. Yes, Gene, in a little while the door of that house closed upon me. I knew Delano would soon be there, it was his plot, the after-scene in his play. Oh, Gene, I have sinned, but only once, never again, but that one sin, has fastened a chain about my neck, about my feet, and shackled my wrists, it has shut me out forever, from your love, mother's love, and the society of my own kind. This is my revenge, Roscoe Delano, has suffered from a mad, wild infatuation for me, because I would have nothing more to do with him.

"He has followed me ever since, thinking some day, he will succeed in winning me, but lately he begins to see how useless his efforts are. He comes here every evening but only for a short half hour, or an hour, and leaves. He is the dark shadow of my life, the spectre which haunts me, we are linked together by some strange destiny, that is beyond me to fathom, by a chain of iron, and only fate, or a merciful God, can break it." She covered her face, with her hands, and wept, as she had never wept before in all her life, and tears had been no friend to her, in the last four years ; blessed tears, they came now like a refreshing rain, and deluged the dry burning and seared rack of her heart.

Gene stood like one rooted to the floor, with deadly hate for Delano, and fierce rage which burned in heart, and soul against him, as the destroyer of his beautiful and loved, sister, that had Delano come in at that moment, he would have murdered him. Then he found his tongue, and his voice, and said, hoarsely, as he stepped a pace or two nearer her:

"Rise Nina, rise, and come home with me." He stooped down and taking her by the arm, he lifted her up. She felt his grip like iron. "How could you have so little faith in myself, and mother, mother who reared you from a child, and loved you as her daughter. And I who never knew the day, I did not love you, to whose boyish eyes, you were the most beautiful thing on earth, and who in my boy fancy and dreams, were the only ideal. I could think of no future without you.

One word from you, and I would have slain Roscoe Delano, and not a jury in New York, would have hung me. Come Nina, let us leave this house, its luxury stifles me, it is bought with sorrow, suffering, and sin. It's a wonder to me you live under the villain's roof. Come Nina, get your mantle and hat, on, or I will not be responsible for my acts, should he enter that door while I am here. And I would rather kill you than let you remain another night in this house."

"Gene, Gene, listen," she cried, stretching out her hands, appealingly, her eyes, red and scalding from tears, "listen Gene dear, listen."

"Ah, God, be merciful to me, and to you, my poor Nina," he said, softening, and tremblingly he held out his arms. "Oh, my dear Nina, forgive me, if I seem harsh, how you must have suffered, my sweet sister, how cruel the fates have been to us both. Surely there is a just God, in heaven, who will right all these crimes against Him, and His children. He closed his arms about her, and she laid her head, upon his shoulder, like a tired child, she knew that this one man's heart, out of all the world of men, beat with true, pure, and disinterested love, for her.

She put both hands up to his face, smoothed his cheeks, brushed back the hair from his brow, and drew her hands over his face again. "Gene, dear Gene, my brother," she said softly through her tears. He laid her head down upon his shoulder, kissed her hair, her brow, her cheek.

"Oh, Nina, you tear the heart out of me, my God, yes, only your brother now." He pushed her from him, and took a step or two and stood with his back to her, his whole young strong manly figure, shook with some overmastering emotion, as if he were plucking from his breast, a bright hope, a long cherished and beautiful dream of love, which had been the light, guide, and ambition to every effort made to rise and succeed.

"Yes, Gene, dear, you are my loved brother, and shall always be my brother, and protector," she said, covering her face, and weeping again.

"Yes, Nina, I am your protector, from now until

death claims one or the other of us," he answered, turning about quickly. "Come let us leave this cursed house, go get your hat, and cape. Take nothing with you, but the dress you have on ; come Nina, make haste."

"Listen Gene," she said, with some of her old proud air, and brushing the tears, from her eyes, "be seated a moment and hear me, hear what I have to tell you. This house and all that is in it is mine, I am not living on Delano's money, I have not taken a cent from him for nearly three years and a half." She then told him, all about her father, and the papers he left when he was dying, and how she had them on her person, when she left home. She related to him, all that was told to me by Bertram Arlington, and now she was in receipt of an income from Italy, and the right to bear her father's title, the Countess Palermo.

And that she had nursed her income, and the young attorney Bertram Arlington, had made several good investments for her, and that she was independently rich. "And now Gene dear," she said, drawing her fingers across her temples, as if to shut out from her memory the awful dark spot, on her life, to forget it, to bury it, and blot it out forever ; and let sunshine, and joy, once more brighten her young days. "Yes, Gene," and she tossed her head, archly, in the old way, "all I have now will be shared with you and mother, I owe it to you and to her, her especially, for her years of care of me. I intend to give up this house, and return the deed to Delano, and I will buy a pretty cottage, in the suburbs. I have an elderly lady living with me here, she is homeless, and much attached to me. I think she will adapt herself, to mother, and they will be friends and I am sure mother will like her.

"All the furnishings of this house, paintings, books, musical instruments, bric-a-brac, are all mine, bought with my father's money. I will have them removed to our new home. I have been thinking for the last year, of this, and of making my whereabouts known to you, and mother. How I wish from my soul, dear Gene, now that you have found me, this heritage, wealth,

family and title, had come to me without the sorrow, stain, and the tragedy which darkens it. But I was not mistress of my own fate, but the prey of existing conditions. I only happened to fare better, than other poor girls, caught in the same trap."

"Oh, my poor Nina," he cried, choking back the feelings that rankled and tore his heart with anguish, "oh, my darling girl, my sister, there is no blame to be laid at your door. We ought to be thankful that you did not sink into the degradation, that so many of your sisters, seem powerless to keep from after taking the first stray step. Oh, Nina, what I too have suffered, in the past four years, since you left us. I have searched this whole city, from north to south, and east to west. Night after night, I have walked its streets and avenues, and public thoroughfares, until day broke in the heavens, thinking I might possibly meet you, and if I had I would have picked you up in my arms, and carried you home, to mother. I have gone to the slums, to dens of infamy, theatres, dance houses, prisons, from there to the most fashionable and high-toned houses, of amusements, and resorts, but you were not among them.

"But you are found here with my arms about you, my eyes looking into yours, and I thank God for it, I thank Him, that it is no worse. But you tell me Nina that Delano still comes here."

"Yes, Gene, as I told you the man has a mad wild insane infatuation for me, not so much now, for it is beginning to dawn upon him, the utter hopelessness of his passion. Besides I have a certain mastery over him, he comes here every night, about eleven o'clock stays a short while and leaves."

"Can't you rid yourself of him?"

"Suffer it to be so now dear Gene, I wish no scandal, so long as he behaves himself, so long as he does not interfere with my personal liberty, or coerces me in any way, I will bear his coming. My name is coupled with his, not openly, but my friends know the truth. As I said, it is the chain which fetters my soul, I must abide by it until a higher power, breaks it. You or myself, dear Gene, or mother, can't help the past, that is dead,

so we must try to be patient, to forget it, and be as happy as we can. Let us rejoice that she who was lost is found. I am still Nina, to you dear Gene, your Nina, your sister." And she playfully stroked his forehead, brushed back his hair, her old way with him.

A great wave of compassion and tenderness for her, welled up in his breast, and swcpt over him. He took her in his arms, kissed her brow, her cheek, her eyelids, and she nestled close to him. On her part it was the thawing out of a heart, which had for four years been frozen, as it were. She had many would be lovers, and scores of admirers, and even Bertram with his great love, and passion, for her, had failed to melt it, for knowing his kind she did not dare to trust him. But Gene, dear Gene, the brother, and companion of her childhood.

Then they sat a long time talking. Gene, was to bring his mother the next day, they thought it a better plan than for Nina to go to her. Gene, was to tell her everything about her Nina, but to say but little about Delano, for the present. Gene told her of Emma Cowen having heard about the Countess Palermo, in the store, and how she Emma, insisted that the Countess, was none other than Nina, his sister, and that some day, she would find she was right. "She must be a prophetess," said Gene, laughing. And Nina, was delighted with Gene's recital of it as he gave spice to Emma's quaint peculiarities.

"You can tell Emma, that your sister Nina is one and the same Countess Palermo, leaving much of the details out. She need know nothing of Delano, only what she is already acquainted with." Gene was to come at all times to her house, until another could be found and purchased that suited them. Then Gene with a spring, rose from his chair.

"In our excitement Nina, we have forgotten some one, the very man we have to thank for this meeting. The man who since the day he landed in New York City, has been untiring in his search for you."

"Oh," cried Nina, breathlessly, "I forgot Mr. Osgood, Bertram Arlington's friend." Gene gave a big laugh, as I came out of my dark corner, smiling, and bowing to Nina,

"Mr. Osgood, you beat me," he said, with another great guffaw. "You have the slickest way of doing things, and getting out of sight," and he laughed again, as if my after performance struck him, as decidedly humorous.

"I ask your ladyship's pardon, for playing the spy, but not intentionally," I said, "but as I arranged this meeting between yourself, and Gene, I wished to be an eyewitness of your happiness."

Nina held out both her hands to me, and thanked me, saying all kinds of pleasant things. "Come into the library. Gene turn on the gas, in the parlor, Samson must have forgotten to light it." I threw myself into an easy chair near the table. Nina came and turned up the lamp to a brighter flame, which fell on my face. I felt her glance upon me.

"Nina," said Gene, as he came into the library, "do you think you ever saw a young gentleman, who resembled Mr. Osgood at our flat before you left home?"

"Yes," she answered, "mother's parlor lodger that summer, and Mr. Osgood, is one and the same. I could not tell where I had seen you the evening you came with Bertram, but I had met you before I knew; I could not recall when or where, I seldom ever forget a face. I saw but little of you at mother's, and so much has come into my life since then, that it never occurred to me until just a moment before Gene spoke of your residence with us that summer, then it came to me like a flash where I had seen you. Your object must have been not to make yourself known to me when you came with Bertram."

"It would have been embarrassing to both of us to have made myself known to you on that evening, and frustrated my plans of bringing yourself and Gene together. I did not know how you felt about having your whereabouts known to your family, so long as you yourself had been silent for four years, I had to work cautiously."

"That is true," she replied, "and I thank you; you have done for me what I have been wanting to do for myself in the last six months, but kept putting it off, not

having the courage to face the ordeal of meeting again after what happened those I loved. I thank you again, and again, for the trouble you have taken, and your kindness to Gene, which makes you one of us. And you will now be always a dear friend," and she smiled sweetly upon me, and her large, soft eyes shone with some of the pure and deep affection she had for Gene.

"Why a friend, Nina, with all the term implies, it is but a term, when it comes to Mr. Osgood who has been more than a brother to me, that is if he will care to own relationship to a poor obscure workman."

"Thanks, my dear Gene, I am proud to be thought worthy of such honest affection, and so far as blood, a king might think himself royal indeed to have your healthy pure blood course through his veins. He held out his hand to me, and his grip was firm and strong, and I felt the warm heart-throbs beat through to his finger tips in that grasp.

Nina then rang for lunch, it was answered by a maid, as Sam the butler was out. In a little while the maid brought a most delicious repast, with hot tea and coffee. We sat chatting for quite a while, until Nina's face began to wear an anxious expression, and I, Beverly Osgood shut my eyes to the shadows passing before me; I wished only to retain the vision of this hour with Gene and Nina, with them the dark past is forgotten, and their dream is of future happiness, a life of sweet peace, quiet, and tranquil love, so for to-night we will rejoice that she who was lost is found.

CHAPTER II.

NINA, COUNTESS PALERMO, AT HOME.

The faint light of the breaking dawn stole into the window of the little parlor of the ground floor flat, of the tenement house No.—Twenty-F— Street, and found Gene, and his mother, still talking over his meeting with Nina. Gene told his mother the whole story concerning the papers she had given her, on her birthday, and their importance, and that Nina had them on her person, when she left home. He told her of her great house, and the grand style in which she lived, and of Roscoe Delano still pursuing her, and persecuting her, keeping the details and many of the facts back. Many times during Gene's recital, Mrs. Lunis broke down and wept bitterly, so did Gene, the tears coursing down his cheeks, as he paced up and down the floor of the small parlor. He also informed his mother, of Nina's intention of buying a home in the suburbs, and of them all living together, and of her looking forward to a happy future life with them. He spoke of Madame Sloan, Nina's companion, a widow, who was homeless, that she would be one of the family, and that Nina said, she was sure mother would like her.

So in this way, Gene prepared his mother for her visit to her adopted daughter's. The dawn had crept and crept, until the full light of day, filled the little parlor, when Mrs. Lunis rose and went back to the kitchen, to make a cup of coffee, for herself and Gene, after which he threw himself on the sofa, in the dining-room, for an hour or two of rest, and sleep. Mrs. Lunis retired to the parlor, and laid down.

It was nearly eleven o'clock, when Gene rang the bell at the door of the Countess Palermo's residence. We will not dwell here on the meeting between Nina and her mother, suffice it to say, that it was as pathetic, but not so tragic, as between Gene and herself. After an

hour or so spent in the library, Mrs. Lunis was carried upstairs, to Nina's boudoir, which was as luxuriously and tastefully furnished in its way, as the grand salon, and library. Here Mrs. Lunis was introduced to Madame Sloan, who took Mrs. Lunis all in at a glance, or in vulgar parlance, sized her up. Still withal her worldliness, and superficiality, and a certain feeling of jealousy, she recognized in the fine, portly, neatly dressed woman, of forty-six or seven, with her pleasant intelligent face, honest blue eyes, a certain power, a strength of character, which she, Madame, was deficient in. She tucked aside her airs and graces, and for once tried to be natural. She never mentioned millions, or her millionaire friends, during Mrs. Lunis's stay. She knew how dearly the Countess loved this adopted mother, for she was often the theme of her conversation. She now of course would come in first. She had loved Nina, since the first day she came to this beautiful home, had she been Nina's own mother, she could not love her more or show her more affection. It would break her heart, if the Countess would turn her adrift in the world, now that she had found her mother. Mrs. Lunis was not behind in her estimate of Madame Sloan, but her larger nature looked upon her frivolities, and weaknesses, with charity, and her heart went out to her in a kindly sisterly feeling, which was not lost on Madame, and she soon learned from the general conversation that ensued, that she was included in their plans, and looked upon as one of the family.

Mrs. Lunis and Gene, dined with Nina and Madame Sloan, in the dining-room, and were waited upon by Samson the butler, whose black face expressed the surprise which made his lips turn ashen-white, when he heard his mistress, call Mrs. Lunis, mother. He remarked to the cook, a middle-aged negress, on going into the kitchen after something: "Law, Nancy, who ye s'pose de company at dinna is? De Madame's mother, and brother."

"Hish—se—ye boy, dats's mo' ob yere lies," said Nancy, crossing her arms, and resting them on her portly waist, her large hips forming porches, as it were.

"It's de truf I tells ye, but dis yere chile doubts his sense an' his eyes, kase de Countess, looks no mo' like dem, den Ise dose you."

After dinner, Gene left to attend to some business for his employer, and towards evening Nina carried her mother home in her carriage.

About two weeks after her meeting with Gene, and her mother, I received a note from her reminding me of her "At Home," on the following evening, Saturday. "Be sure to come," she wrote, "as I expect a larger number of guests, than usual. It is the first 'At Home' I have given since my return from Long Branch, and for some weeks before I went to the Branch, and it is the last, I intend giving in this house. Gene will not be here, he would not come even if he didn't have some workman's club, which he writes me he must attend. Come early. Bertram will be here. Nina Palermo."

In the meantime I had a visit from Bertram. Gene, who knew considerable about real estate, and about locations, where there were new houses for sale, and in course of erection, was ordered by Nina, to be on the lookout for a suitable house, but Bertram was to attend to the purchasing of it. It was then necessary that Gene and Bertram should meet, and I had to play *tiers-état*. I took Gene to his office, and introduced him. The men would have liked each other, but Nina came between. Gene knew nothing of Bertram's love for Nina, only what he divined, when he saw so handsome and elegant a young man. Bertram was cool, quiet, and reserved, but withal acted the gentleman, treating the boy with courtesy.

Gene did not appear at his best, he was shy and awkward, his face wearing a scowl all through their interview. The boy mistrusted all of Bertram Arlington's kind, ever since his sister's flight, and he had no liking in his heart for the men belonging to the upper world of New York City. Bertram in speaking of him to me afterwards, for Bertram had one or two long talks with him, said he was a very intelligent level-headed young fellow, with a splendid capacity for business. "I like

him," said Bertram, "he is just the kind of man, who would be worth a good deal to my father."

It was nearly nine o'clock Saturday evening, when I rang the bell at the residence of the Countess Palermo. Samson the butler, was in full evening dress, and looked every inch a gentleman of color. As I entered the hall, the whole house presented a scene of dazzling light, color, and perfumes. Everywhere the eye rested, were blooming plants, palms, cactuses; bowls of roses stood on the posts of the landing of the stairway, and in the grand salon, and library, their colors blending with the shimmer and sheen of silken stuffs, making a symphony of gold, and silver hues, and over all pervaded a faint pink atmosphere. Books, paintings, marble statuary, all looking like some enchanted scene of art, inhabited only by the gods, and goddesses. The grand salon, and library, were thrown into one, by taking out the small panels, and pushing the folding-doors back into an opening in the wall, leaving but the pillars, with the silken drapery drawn about them.

I was welcomed by Madame Sloan, whose tall, slim figure, was clad in black satin, with white lace at the throat. Her faded brown hair, now sprinkled with gray, was worn in plain bands, combed back from her forehead, its coils fastened at the nape of the neck, with a comb of tortoise-shell. While she had passed the threshold of middle age, she was in perfect keeping with her surroundings, indeed she rather added to them, by her inborn air of distinction, which took away any impression which might be suggestive of *nevan riche*, by the great luxury about her. Although in every sense tinged with snobbery, and her whole being permeated with the love of money, and she had all her life talked and dreamed of millions of dollars; still there was that old New England stock, strong and sturdy, back of her, which gives ancestry and character to things and people.

She received me with all the graces and airs, as if she herself, were mistress of this grand mansion, but withal so kind and friendly. She introduced me to an artist, a Chauncy Willis, a young man of thirty to thirty-five years old; he was of medium height, with dark hair, and

pale clear skin, well-cut features, and whiskers forked on the chin. Also to a Morrison Siles, a tall, slender, handsome man, I should think along in the forties. He had a poet's head, dark curling hair, well-defined features, a broad brow, with marked ideality, deep dreamy gray eyes, a heavy drooping moustache, which shaded a mouth refined, but somewhat convivial. He had all the air and manner of the art-world, and a bon-vivant; he was the painter of the beautiful figure, "Sleep," that hung over the mantelpiece in the grand salon. Chauncey Willis was a marine painter; a small painting of his, with a strong dash of the sea, a low line of light, and a three-mast sail, rising in the distance, hung in the library, on one of the panels, between the three windows.

In a few moments Sam ushered in two gentlemen, one a middle-aged man, of a literary type, and with him, a young man, of twenty-five or six; they were in evening dress, and the young man was exceedingly swell. He was a handsome fellow, straight and slim, and away above the average height. But young as he was, he had that New York City air, of *l'homme blasé*. The older man, Chester Harding, was a well-known newspaper man and magazine writer; he had a strong intellectual face, sparse brown hair, and small bright gray eyes, which had an absent vague way, of looking out from under glasses. For all they were observing eyes.

Chester Harding had started in youth, with the ambition and enthusiasm to do something of note, something which would set him apart from his *confrères* in the literary field; he had dreams and visions of high things, but after a long battle with men, and penury, the iron hand was too much for him, so he drifted like most of the American men of his day, to becoming a literary hack, a mere mechanical drudge, which paid him well, but crushed his aspirations, and all the originality out of him. Chester Harding was having an interesting conversation with Morrison Siles, and Frank Boyington, his young companion, whose father was a Brooklyn merchant of some wealth, and he himself, was now a reporter on one of the Brooklyn morning papers. Willis and myself were exchanging a few remarks on pictures, books,

and things, when Bertram entered, and to my surprise and amazement, Oswald de Coute followed.

"Oh, ah, Beverly, my deah fellow, so, really so pleased to see you," he said, holding out his hand, "when did you arrive in New Yawk? Come, my deah fellow, hea to convert us, I suppose, ha, ha. You'll find us a ha-r-d stubborn set. I suppose like the rest of youa colleagues, youa a silva advocate." He laughed, as he took a light kid glove from off his left hand. He had grown much stouter in the last four years, and wore an evening suit of great elegance and fit. Small diamond studs, of the pur-est water, gleamed in his immaculate shirt front, and his boutonnier was of blush roses. Bertram was also in even-ing dress, wearing a carnation rose in his buttonhole; he looked handsomer than I ever saw him.

Some were seated, others standing about in groups. I was speaking with Bertram, when Nina made her appearance; my heart leaped to my mouth, at sight of her, and how must the other men have been affected, when I so cool and so hard to be touched, in matters of the heart, could only gaze and feast my eyes on such tran-scendant beauty. She wore a long trailing robe of rich brocade, which looked like beaten yellow cream, a sort of princess. It opened at the neck in a V-shape and flared out, tapering back into a high Medici collar, which was studded thick with pearls. The sleeves were long, com-ing down to the wrist in a ruffle of priceless lace. About her waist, was a long chatelain, made of heavy links of wrought silver, and gold, it was attached to the left side of her waist, crossed low down on the hips, to the right, where the long train was drawn through, falling over in a loop. Clasping her bare white throat, was a necklace of pearls, and diamonds, a pearl comb fastened the lux-uriant coils of her black hair, high upon her regal head, a bandeaux of pearls, like the one she wore the night I saw her at the theatre, bound the curls on her brow.

Her great dark eyes, luminous with the light of her soul, yet tinged with sadness, and the sadder drama of her life, a dreamfulness which made them a dream. Her skin, white like the pearls which nestled in her raven hair, and the lilies on her bosom. She was not the

simple, loving, tender woman, I saw here a few nights before with Gene Lunis; she had put that woman aside, and stood now in our midst a queen, a radiant, brilliant proud, dazzling woman of the world, with all her armor on, ready to do battle.

She had been to a great school in the last four years, she was a pupil of the world. Her intellect was quick to read human nature, to grasp its weaknesses, foibles, follies, and vanities, and use them in her own way. She stretched out her arms, giving one hand to Bertram, and the other to myself. I saw the same expression come over his face, as he took the hand, she held out to him, between his own two, as I saw on the night in the theatre, when I sat dumb and dazed, thinking them some apparition, some phantom of my brain, a look of baffled passion, of hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick. The men gathered about her, all vieing with each other to do her homage. Chester Harding's absent gray eyes, flamed up as he paid her some flattering compliment, which she acknowledged with a smile, yet the short upper lip curled proudly, as she gave back a quick retort, which vanquished him, but he accepted it graciously, bowing almost to the ground before her. An expression of pleasure passed over Oswald de Coute's face, as he rested his eyes upon her, like an epicure, who has exhausted the resources and devices of his cook, by accident comes across some new dish, which delights his palate. Nina was a new dish to this epicure, this veteran of the social world, schooled in all the tactics which go to conquer in the field of femininity.

This connoisseur, so graceful, yet so bold, with so much cool audacity, yet ever courteous. His handsome person, elegant manners, his lazy English drawl in speaking, yet ever on the alert, to show attention to the fair one, made him a great favorite with women. Still withal, faithless, intriguing, sensual, and sensuous, loving. From what I gleaned from Bertram, his sister, the lovely Jeanette, was none too happy with him. Whether it came from some breeze wafted to her ears of his liaison, before their marriage, with Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, I know not. But what *faux pas* he made before his mar-

riage, he did not insult his wife, or do her the outrage to keep a mistress, as many of the married men, of his kind, do in New York.

It was not the first time he was a guest at the Countess Palermo's "At Homes," or the second, or third, that he enjoyed her hospitality, but it was the first since spring. The Countess Palermo, was to this *l'homme blasé, l'homme du monde*, a rare species of *la femme du monde*, as he thought her, so beautiful, with her regal form, and deep, dark, misty eyes, and a face which made one think of some tragic love song, a refinement that was charming, a brilliancy which gleamed, and flashed like gems of the purest water, and which drew men to her and still kept them at bay.

He had heard whispers about her coupling her name with that vulgar shopman, as he termed Delano, the mystery which shut her out from New York's upper world, where she belonged, and Bertram was really in love with her, he knew. Well, he didn't blame him. Bertram spoke of her but little to him, but he had assured him, nothing existed between her and Delano. All the men thought there did, but Bertram had said to him, she was as pure as Venus, when rising at dawn in the heavens.

To Nina, Oswald de Coute was an exceedingly interesting personage, he was just the kind of man she liked to tilt swords with. He was so well-bred, he would give and take with such grace, and good-nature, that it was a delight to spar with him. He knew his power and like a woman, he would stoop to conquer. With him her flashes of wit, and repartee came thick and fast, he was vain, but no cad, when hit, he enjoyed it, so long as it came from a woman, he was all the more delicate in his return thrusts.

Young Boyington could hardly contain himself, when presented to Nina; surprise, wonder, and delight, blazed from his eyes, as they rested upon her, and he hardly knew what to say, or do. It was the first time he met her; he had heard whispers of her, at the clubs, and in the circles where young men of his guild, and pretensions met to gossip, for it's folly to say that men don't

like a bit of the latest scandal, as well as women. He had begged Harding to obtain him an invitation to the Countess's "At Homes." Young, impulsive, with all the passions alive, and never having curbed them, he went right in pellmell, to making love to her. With a pale face and tugging nervously at his mustache, he followed her where ever she moved about the room. finally she stood still and asked him if he wouldn't be seated. He smiled, tugged at his mustache, mumbled some compliment, then he caught Harding's eye, which was full of reproof, he took the hint and threw himself into the nearest chair, and began talking to Chauncy Willis.

Morrison Siles rested his deep gray eyes upon her, as she spoke a minute or two with him. They were lovely eyes, with a poet's soul shining in them. He had a grave, elegant, courteous manner, and loved the young Countess with the love of a father for a daughter. Loved her for her beauty, intelligence, and womanliness. And he was a great favorite with her. Chauncy Willis was well-known in New York for his marine views; he belonged to the impressionist school, he was quite talented, but was essentially a worldling, cold and mercenary, he loved money and the plaudits of men. He toadied to Nina, because she was rich, bought his work, and lived in a fine establishment. Had she been poor, and as beautiful as Eve, with the intellect of Aspasia, so long as she could be of no material use to him, he would not have desired her acquaintance. He would send a charwoman, if she happened to call at his studio, to say he was not at home.

Madame Sloan did her part in entertaining the other gentlemen, as well as myself; she was quite interesting, and seemed to grow younger by ten years, as she laughed and chatted with us all, saying gracious and amusing things, as she passed from one to the other. After a while she left and went into the hall, and ordered Sam to arrange the large table in the library, for whist. That eight could sit around the table, it made it more sociable, and still play the four-hand game.

Nina didn't play, Madame Sloan took her seat at the

lower end of the table. Morrison Siles, Bertram, Oswald de Coute, and myself had the upper end, near the mantelpiece. Madame, Chauncy Willis, Chester Harding, and Frank Boyington, the lower end. Bertram sat at my right, at the head of the table, Morrison Siles at my left, and Oswald de Coute, his partner opposite, facing the grand salon. We had been playing but a short while when Samson brought in a silver salver, full of small glasses, filled with sherry, and passed them around.

Nina took a seat between myself and Bertram, Sam placed a glass of wine before her, but I observed she did not touch it. I drank half of mine, as I felt tired, and thought it would buoy me up. Bertram, Oswald de Coute, and the other men, drank theirs at one swallow, as if they were thirsty, and I suppose to give zest to their playing. However, the glasses were so small that their contents could be taken at a mouthful. Bertram was happy to have Nina at his side, so near him; so was I. She was more than usually bright and brilliant on this evening. I could have taken an oath, there was not a man sitting around the table, but what was in love with her.

She understood the game of whist well, but cards, she did not like to play, she told me she had a strange aversion to them, that she only tolerated them, because they amused the gentlemen. In a few minutes she rose, and seated herself near Madame Sloan. Frank Boyington forgot the game, his points, cards, and all about him, and began gabbing to her. I drew the attention of Bertram, and the other men around me to him, and they all roared with laughter, but Bertram's eyes shot out scorn and fire at the youth, for his daring impudence. Boyington amused Nina greatly, so to save him from making further breaks in the game, she left the table, and seated herself at the piano, where she gave us some delightful arias from the operas, some waltzes by Strauss, and some more recent and popular pieces, by different composers. Morrison Siles asked for a song; she sang the drinking song from *Faust*, and "When in dreams I see thee." Samson watched the glasses, for Samson himself, was

in high glee. He soon brought in bottles of champagne-frappé.

Nina chatted a while with us again, then went and began tuning up her violin; she seemed imbued with the spirit of music. She gave us, "Ah, I have sighed to rest me," from *Il Trovatore*. She outdid herself in its execution, the fervor and the soul, she put into it. It warmed the whist players up to the game, and they felt good and kindly toward each other, and all the world.

I found Morrison Siles a charming fellow, witty, with a quiet kind of humor, that was delightful. Oswald de Coute was an expert whist player, and loved the game, and I could see did better under the influence of champagne-frappé. Bertram was his master, though, and under the stimulus of the wine, excelled himself, and every one at the table. I, being a poor player, was content to drop out, and so did Madame Sloan, and the table formed a six-hand game. After a while I looked at my watch, it was a quarter to eleven, when the second game was finished. The Countess gave the order to Sam to arrange the table for lunch, they would not have it in the dining-room, as was intended, but in the library.

We all gathered in the grand salon, while Madame Sloan, Sam, and a white maid, a middle-aged woman, attended to the supper. It seemed but a short while until we were all seated about the table, which groaned under the weight of flowers, fruits, perfumes, ices, creams, jellies, cakes, crackers, salads, game, and oysters, in different styles. The Countess took her seat between Bertram and myself, for we all resumed the same seats, we had when playing. Samson was busy passing plates of scalloped oysters, which the maid dished out of a large granite pan, placed on a side table, brought in for the occasion. All the men were happy, jolly, and hungry. While Nina was playing, Samson had filled their glasses a little too freely. Like the voter, he was on hand early and often.

I never saw Nina so happy. Her usual manner was reserved and tinged with hauteur, but to-night, she took on a charming abandon, and seemed to throw her whole self into the feast. But in the midst of the bright quips, the rpeartee, and gay laughter, my quick ear caught the

click of the latch-key, turning in the heavy front door, then it swung open. Nina must have heard it even before I did, for she turned pale, and the glad smile died on her lips, and in a few moments Roscoe Delano entered the library, unannounced. He was in full evening dress, knowing it to be the Countess's "At Home" night. He was not a society man, he knew little or nothing of its conventions or demands, and cared less, but he had a great deal of vanity about his personal appearance, and didn't want to be behind the men he met there. He had been drinking, and his face was the color of a Buffalo's hide, and looked coarse and bloated.

"Good-evening, gentlemen, ha, ha," he shouted, thrusting his hands down in his pants' pockets, and casting his glance on Nina, as he advanced towards her. She returned it with a scornful laugh, and an expression on her face, which was awful, in its contempt and loathing. "Ha, ha, more victims," he said, drawing closer to her side, "and every one of them drunk, ha, ha, ha."

"Not my victims, but the victims of their own follies, like yourself," she answered, in an undertone, but he heard it, so did I, and so must Bertram, also, who was seated at her right. I do not think the other guests did.

"Go on, gentlemen, 'drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.' Go in gentlemen, begash gentlemen, I'm the victim, I'm ignored, not thought enough of to be sent an invitation to her ladyship's 'At Homes.' You ought to think yourselves fortunate to be so favored by my ward, my ward in chancery, ha, ha. This queen, the most beautiful woman in New York City, the Countess Palermo, ha, ha." His laugh was full of malignity, and derision. Bertram turned pale as death, and his eyes blazed with anger, and fierce hate of the man, who dared to speak to her thus. But he beat back the desire which almost consumed him, to rise and strike Delano to the floor, where he stood, for he did not want to make a scene; scenes are exceedingly unpleasant things, and it would horrify the Countess. Oswald de Coute's face, was the picture of cool insolence, and disgust, as he eyed Delano, and picked at his oysters, with a silver fork.

Young Boyington could hardly contain himself. When

Delano first entered the library, he dropped his knife and fork on his plate, settled in his chair, and with surprise, astonishment, and utter dumfoundedness, written on every feature, watched his every move. Then this was the man who he had heard so many conflicting stories about, who rumor said, remained in the background, and paid the Countess's bills. But he felt now that he wanted to take him by the collar of the coat, and pitch him out of the window. Delano walked around to the opposite side of the table, seeing an opening where De Coute was seated; he stood at his right, so that he could face Nina. Sam brought him a chair, he drew it closer to De Coute's side, and nearer the table. Sam then placed a glass of champagne before him, which he drank off at nearly one swallow. "A dish of these scalloped oysters, Sam," he asked with a great puff.

I turn my head quickly in the direction of the door, leading into the hall, thinking I heard stealthy steps; they seem to come up the basement stairs. I listen a moment, but they die away, I tell myself I am a little nervous and excited by Delano's conduct, and my sympathy for Nina. Still, before leaving my room, that evening, I felt strangely oppressed. Once or twice as I stood before my dressing-case mirror buttoning my collar, and tying my cravat, I could have sworn that some dark shadow flitted between me and the gaslight. And when on my way to the Countess's house, I was sure that whatever it was, it still pursued me, for I was startled by the same shadow, walking side by side with me until I reached the door, where it seemed to leave me, and then I forgot all about it until this moment.

"Those oysters were good," said Delano, pushing his glass to Sam, to be refilled. Nina shakes her head at Sam, but Sam does not see her, and fills the glass. "Some of that cream, with jelly, Sam." Sam helps him to the cream, then he rose to drink a toast, holding the glass of champagne in his hand.

Ah, again I hear stealthy steps, this time they seem to be in the grand salon, I hear the stirring of the drapery, what is the matter with me? Ah, Beverly, this seeing, and feeling gift of yours, is annoying at times, for to

rise now and go looking about would be to make myself ridiculous. But ah, again I turn quickly in my chair, as I thought I detected the faint rustle of a woman's skirts, and look back of me into the salon parlor, but I see nothing. I glance down to the foot of the table, Madame Sloan is there talking with Chester Harding, and Nina sits by my side, and the men are all in their place. It must be some of the female servants, stealing into the grand salon to get a glimpse of the company. Then my attention is attracted to Delano.

"Here's to my ward, my beautiful queen, my ward in chancery, ha, ha — his—sss. My God, what is that ? wiss-ss-s, a flash, a gleam, a flame of fire. A shot, and the blood spurts from De Coute's head, another, and another shot, and Delano falls to the floor shot to the heart.

Nina, with a scream, which seems to rend the walls of the whole house, and which I never can forget until I lie as lifeless as Delano, faints dead away, so does Madame Sloan. I jump to my feet with a thousand conflicting thoughts, and surmises, passing through my brain. I run into the salon parlor, no one there, and then into the hall, and down its length to the head of the basement stairs, where Sam, his black face an ashen hue, passes me, and with two strides is at the bottom. I rush back to the library, Bertram hasn't moved, he seemed struck dumb, and could neither speak or act.

"Bertram, for heaven's sake, rouse yourself, and attend to Nina."

At the sound of my voice, he leaped to his feet, bent over her prostrate body, lifted her in his arms, and carried her to a couch in the drawing-room, and the thought came to him, and let us not blame him, that she was all his now, this hateful Delano was out of the way, not by her hand or his, but some unknown, perhaps by some of his many other victims. And his heart swelled with compassion for her, and for the first time he kissed her cheek, her lips, and chafed her hands, and called her endearing names. Then Madame Sloan who had recovered, came in with a glass of wine, and in a few minutes Bertram left her in the care of Madame Sloan,

and he went into the library to look after his brother-in-law, Oswald de Coute. Morrison Siles, and Chester Harding, had taken their handkerchiefs and bound up the wound, while Frank Boyington who had taken in the whole situation at a glance went for the nearest doctor.

"Ah," said the doctor, as he entered the library, and gave a quick scrutinizing glance about the room. Chauncy Willis pointed to Delano. "This man's dead," said the doctor, examining Delano's body, shot to the heart, "and who fired the shot?" he asked, looking towards the couch, where De Coute lay, then he went over to him, and began taking the bandage off De Coute's head, to dress the wound. "My dear sir, you have had a narrow escape, had the ball gone a quarter of an inch farther, to the left, it would have lodged in the brain, and you would have been a dead man. As it is you are safe and will be all right, in two or three weeks."

"The ball that killed Roscoe Delano was intended for me," said Oswald. "There were three shots fired, the first struck me, I saw the other coming, and dipped my head. Delano, who was standing up and facing the salon, I think was too stunned to move, and got the contents of the revolver."

"Who do you think fired them?" asked the doctor.

"That is the mystery, which will have to be solved at the trial," returned De Coute.

"No one in this room, fired the shots which killed Roscoe Delano, and wounded my brother-in-law," said Bertram calmly. "We were all sitting around the table, enjoying ourselves, with the best of feeling for each other, we are all gentlemen and friends. There was no one in the house, except the Countess Palermo, the hostess, and her companion, Madame Sloan, and all the servants. The Countess was seated at the table with the rest of the party, and so was her companion, when the shots were fired."

With that Nina, who had recovered, came into the library. She was as white as the lilies on her bosom, her face, pinched, haggard, and old, as if years, had passed over her head, in the few minutes since Delano was struck dead, before her eyes. She came staggering

in with her arms outstretched in mute appeal to Bertram, then all his wits came to him, he saw in an instant, as it were, their whole situation, he leaped to her side, and took both her hands in his.

"Oh, Bertram, who could have done it?" she cried, as her glance fell on the dead man. "It is awful, horrible, Bertram, the whole city will ring with it in the morning, and my name, my father's proud name, which I have guarded so jealously, which I have suffered, and borne so much for, will be dragged in the mud and mire of the street, heralded all over the world, by the newspapers, oh, it is horrible."

"Be calm and cool, Nina, brace yourself up for the ordeal; the officers of the law, will be here in a few moments, Boyington has gone for them. And now, Nina, Countess Palermo, my time has come to prove my love, the love I bear you, the love which you have doubted, which you have no faith in. From henceforth, my time, my talents, fortune, and life, will be all yours, in this struggle," he whispered.

"Oh," she groaned, covering her face with her hands, "just as I was looking forward to a new and happy life, with mother, and Gene, my brother. Oh, Bertram, that dead man has been the *bete noire* of my life, its evil genius, my God, the curse of my youth." She bowed her head, raised her arms up, and locked her fingers in the coils of her hair.

"Oh, my Nina, I too dared to hope, that when you gave up this house, and returned to your mother and brother, he would not have dared to annoy you longer; Gene would have prevented it, but let us not think of it now dear, here are the officers."

Two police officers entered with Boyington, who had gone to the nearest precinct, one was a sergeant. All the servants, cook, housemaid, and the middle-aged woman, who waited with Sam at supper, and who seemed to act as an upper servant, or housekeeper, were gathered upstairs by orders of the police, even the coachman was awakened and called in.

"We had been playing whist," said Bertram, after the sergeant was through questioning the others, "and had

not been seated long at the supper-table, when Roscoe Delano, of the firm of ——, the large dry-goods house, on Sixth Avenue, came in. The Countess was a ward of his, and he was in the habit of coming to her 'At Homes,' about half after ten or eleven o'clock, staying half an hour or an hour, and leaving. Samson the butler, here, says Mr. Delano, frequently left the front door ajar, when he came in, until he hung up his hat, and his cane; he might have forgotten to shut the door, and some one in the meantime, who had been watching their opportunity, slipped into the house, for the shots came from the grand salon. The first shot fired, struck De Coute, he dipped his head, and Delano received the other two. No one but the dead man, caught a glimpse of the one who fired the shot."

The police searched the house from cellar to attic, but found nothing. I shall have to put you all under arrest," said the sergeant, "and take you to the precinct station."

"Can't there be an officer detailed, to hold the Countess, and her household prisoners here, until after the inquest?" inquired Bertram.

"Perhaps you can get the captain to do that, but you will all have to come with me, to the precinct. I will send an officer here to take charge of the house."

"We are all gentlemen, well known in New York, and thoroughly responsible," said Bertram, somewhat impatiently.

"I'm sure of that, sir, but well-known gentlemen sometimes get into trouble too, as well as common folks; but it's very unfortunate that such a tragedy should occur in a great house like this."

"I would like to change my dress," said Nina, "and also my companion here, Madame Sloan."

"Certainly ma'am, I will send an officer upstairs with ye both."

In a short while Nina, and Mrs. Sloan, came back. Nina wore a dark navy-blue serge, with a black mantle thrown over her shoulders, and a dark hat. Mrs. Sloan was dressed in deep black, and with them came the middle-aged woman, who we shall call Ann Simmons. In the meantime, Bertram had sent Boyington for a carriage;

so Nina, Countess Palermo, accompanied by the women of her household, and Bertram Arlington, who scarcely left her side, only while she absented herself, to change her white silken robe, and jewels, for a dark serge, was driven in the carriage to the precinct. Myself, and the other men walking there.

This was the ending of that party, to which she had looked forward to as being the gayest, brightest, and happiest, of her life; after which she would bid farewell to the great house, forever. How little did she think, that the denouement would be the horrible tragedy just enacted, or that she would leave it that night, never again to cross its threshold.

CHAPTER III.

SEEKS FORGETFULNESS IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW.

After a hurried statement of the shooting of Roscoe Delano given by each of the witnesses, we were all discharged but Nina and Madame Sloan, who were held until after the coroner's inquest. Bertram and myself tried all the persuasive powers we were master of, upon the captain, to get him to release Nina and Madame until further developments, so that she could go home to her mother's apartments, but it was of no avail. The captain very kindly offered the prisoners one of the matron's rooms for the night. After seeing that they were made comfortable, Bertram and myself took leave of each other at the door of the station. He called a cab for Oswald de Coute and himself, and they were driven to his hotel.

With a heavy, aching heart, I made my way to the little flat on 20 F— Street to break the sad news to the family, who but a few weeks before had found the loved lost daughter and sister, and had taken a new lease of life and happiness. It was full day when I rang the bell at the door of Mrs. Lunis's apartments. After a wait

of three or four minutes, the door was opened ajar by Mrs. Lunis, who had hurriedly slipped on a wrapper.

"Oh, it's you Mr. Osgood," she exclaimed, the color dying out of her face. "Oh, yes, come in; excuse me for keeping you standing in the hall. When you rang I was having such a strange, troubled dream about Nina, but really I hope nothing is the matter," she said, shutting the door after I entered.

"Calm yourself, Mrs. Lunis, Nina is all safe, nothing has occurred that you or Gene, or I can help," I said, seeing that she had turned deadly white.

"Oh, thank God Nina is safe. Nina, my poor child, my unfortunate daughter, oh, oh, dear sir, her intellect and beauty has been a curse to her, and to those that love her."

"Sit down Mrs. Lunis, sit down here by me, and listen, for she stood by the door, nervously fumbling at the buttons of her wrapper that she had not taken the time to fasten.

"Oh, dear Mr. Osgood, something dreadful has happened I knew, I felt it last night. Gene was out, he was at his club; it was the first meeting since they adjourned in May for the summer, and it was about half after ten when he got home. I was alone all evening, but sure that's nothing, I am always alone when Gene goes out, unless Emma Cowen or Jacob Astor, drops in before they go upstairs to their own apartments.

"I was sitting in the dining-room sewing, I am very brave if I do say it myself, and have good common sense about things, but I kept hearing footsteps in the parlor all evening. I got up twice and came in here and lit the gas, and looked to see if all the doors and windows were fastened. I went back and sat down, and took up my sewin' again, thinkin' it all my imagination, but in a short while, oh, I could have sworn sir, that some one came and stood by my shoulder, 'Holy Mother,' I cried to myself, 'protect me, what is that?' an' I let the waist of a dress I was sewin' on drop out of my hands on the floor. I looked all about me, rose up and came in here the third time, I had left the gas burning a little, but I could see nothing. I wished Emma Cowen would come

down, I would have gone up to her mother's, but I expected Gene in every moment. An' I have been dreaming all night about Nina, she's in some trouble sir, I know. Oh, do tell me sir."

I let her talk on, feeling it would prepare her to hear the worst. Then I related to her as briefly as possible what had happened, and that Roscoe Delano had been shot and killed in the library, under her very eyes, by some unknown person.

"Oh, Mr. Osgood, a just retribution, if the killing had only happened anywhere else, but in her house, and under her eyes."

"Yes, if it had only happened anywhere else but in her house," I repeated reflectively, more as if speaking to myself, "how fortunate it would have been for Nina."

"Where is Nina?" she asked, looking so pale and worn, that she seemed to have aged years since I came into the room. "She surely didn't stay in that house after the shooting."

"In prison," I answered.

"In prison, Mr. Osgood, oh, blessed Mother of God be pitiful to my poor girl and to us all," she said, rising from her seat, but she had put her hands up to hide the tears which had forced their way to her eyes, and flowed down her cheeks. "I will call Gene, Mr. Osgood."

"My dear Mrs. Lunis be calm, everything will be all right in a few days; Nina and Madame are just detained at the precinct until after the corner's inquest, which will be to-day or to-morrow. Nina has many influential friends besides myself, and yourself, and Gene. You shall have to make ready here for her and Madame Sloan, for Nina will never set foot in that great house again."

"Thank God," she said in a half whisper. Then I raised my eyes and saw Gene standing in the archway which divided the parlor and the small bedroom, he had drawn aside the portières, and was about to enter as Mrs. Lunis rose to call him.

"Mr. Osgood, I have heard all," he said, his face as pale and haggard as his mother's. "Roscoe Delano has met with his just deserts at last, but at what cost to Nina

who can tell. To be shot down in her house, and under her very eyes, awful, horrible. Who do you suppose was the murderer?"

"That is the mystery, some one must have followed him to the house and stolen in. Sam the butler, says that Delano often left the hall door ajar, when he came in, in the evening he would give it a swing to, but sometimes the latch wouldn't catch, but he generally closed it before leaving the hall. Sam on two or three occasions found it open, after that he made it his business to follow behind Delano to see if it were closed, but last night he was so busy waiting on the guests that he forgot all about the door. Either that or some one stole in through the basement during the day, and secreted themselves in the house, for the shots which wounded De Coute and killed Delano came from the grand salon."

"Some one of his many victims, perhaps," said Gene, walking up and down the floor, "who has been watching for this chance for months and years to kill him. Come mother, try and pull yourself together, and make us a cup of coffee and some breakfast. Mr. Osgood has been up all night, then we will go to the police precinct."

"I did not just like the way in which Gene took this crisis in his sister's life, the dead quiet of his manner was so different from his natural impulsiveness and hot passionate feelings in things concerning her. I think though, all the quick changing emotions of the man had been lived through while he listened, alone in the parlor bedroom, and he had steeled himself to be calm before he came in the presence of his mother and myself.

Mrs. Lunis made us a delicious cup of coffee. Nina's cook never made coffee to equal it; we had also some lovely homemade rolls and butter, baked the day before (so Mrs. Lunis whispered to me, she was sorry she hadn't something better). I replied if she had the whole world, I couldn't enjoy it more. Gene drank two cups of coffee and ate but one roll, I was famished with hunger, for we had just seated ourselves and commenced to eat of Nina's supper, when Delano came, and a few minutes later the shots were fired. I drank two good cupfuls of

coffee, and ate two rolls. Dear Mrs. Lunis, barely sipped her coffee, and didn't taste a mouthful.

In a short while we were in the office of the precinct, we were informed by the matron who was called in, that the Countess Palermo and her companion were lying down, they were worn out after being up all night. Would the gentlemen take a seat in the office, and she would tell them that friends wished to see them. In a short while she returned and said we could go up and to follow her. I bid Gene good-bye here, saying I would see him again about three in the afternoon, and to be very careful what he said before strangers, and particularly the police, until he saw Bertram Arlington, who he might expect any moment. Bertram I was sure would act as Nina's counsel, and would also engage to help him the best in the City of New York.

"Mr. Osgood," he said, turning round and looking me straight in the eye, his face white and wearing a rigid determined expression, "one cannot tell in a case like this what turn things may take. There is the State, and Delano's people on his side. You don't understand the New York people like I do. But one thing I'm certain of, Nina shall never go to prison charged with the murder of Delano. I will lay my plans before Mr. Arlington and his counsel, should the worst come to the worst, which I feel likely it will. I know what can be done; no, my sister Nina has suffered enough at the hands of Delano. Life would become unbearable to me if she should have to go to prison."

"Nonsense Gene, it's absurd to think that by any possible turn in affairs she would even be suspected of having the slightest connection with the killing of Delano. My dear fellow the idea is absurd, with so many eye-witnesses of the shooting. Banish that thought from your mind."

As I made my way to my room to take a few hours' rest, and to try and get some sleep, I stopped at the first news stand and bought two of the morning papers. To my amazement, for I did not think on account of the lateness of the hour there would be anything said of the death of Delano. But there it was in large headlines.

‘ The killing of Roscoe Delano, of the large dry goods house of —— on Sixth Avenue, shot and killed in the house of his mistress on West 80 S—— Street. Full particulars could not be obtained before going to press on account of the lateness of the hour.’ The evening papers came out with large headlines, and several columns of sensational matter.

Poor Nina’s reputation was put upon the rack and torn to shreds, the articles were made up of a few grains of truth, and from these a thousand falsifications were spun from the brain of the sensational news venders. One evening paper stated to the effect that Miss Palermo was very beautiful, cultured, and intellectual, she lived in a large modern mansion, in the fashionable and aristocratic neighborhood of West 80 S—— Street. She styled herself Countess, but it was well known and so forth.

The morning of the coroner’s inquest, she picked up a paper that Madame Sloan had been reading to glance over it’s columns, when she chanced to see her own name heading a page; she read it, then rose up pale and haggard from her chair, her dark eyes misty with tears.

“ My blessed Father,” she cried, dropping the paper from her hands on the floor, “ I never thought but what men had some sense of honor, when it came to telling such falsehoods. Do they want to make me out the slayer of Delano, and Bertram Arlington my lover?”

On the morning of the second day the inquest was held. Mrs. Delano with her son and daughter was there. Nina was gowned in black, it must have been the same dress, so indescribable in its make, that she wore the night I first saw her on West 80—S— Street after four years, when I could think of nothing she resembled more than Juno, in the rôle of a tragedy queen, all in black floating gauze and silk. Upon her head she wore a small black bonnet, and a bunch of hothouse white peonies nestled on her bosom amidst the soft meshes of tulle. Never did I see her look so beautiful, never can I forget her face, never. White as a calla lily, her great dark eyes in their expression more than usually melancholy, they seemed to burn with pain, and in their sad-

ness lurked the shadow of coming events. Her mein was cold, proud, and scorn tinged every feature as she sat beside her mother, Madame Sloan, and Gene. I believe that in the depths of her heart she felt a relief that her persecutor was dead and out of the way, and never again would she lay eyes on him. Bertram had worked like a Trojan for her, and I was not idle. I went personally to the different newspapers to see the managers, and show them that every line they printed against the Countess Palermo as being the mistress of Delano was false. Bertram went to several of the morning papers to have them stop their attacks on the Countess and himself, and to wait for further developments to be brought out in the trial.

Bertram had also engaged the best criminal lawyers in the city. Old Waite was there, as cold, pitiless, and soulless as ever; the skin of his face like a piece of dried orange peel, his tall gaunt figure loomed up over the heads of the two other partners of the house. The inquest was hurried through with like all inquests are; the witnesses were each in their turn called and gave their statement of the shooting, but all were guarded in what they said, only so far as would exonerate any one present at the tragedy. Oswald de Coute came with his bandaged head, came in person, as he was the best witness for the defense. Nina came after him; she simply stated that she was seated at the table with her back to the grand salon, Roscoe Delano was seated opposite to her, next to him Mr. De Coute. Delano had risen to drink a health to the party about the table; she saw nothing, heard nothing, until the shot went whizzing past her head, and struck Mr. De Coute, then the other two, then she fainted, that was all. Bertram and his attorney parried some questions put by the coroner then she was dismissed.

Then the witnesses for the State were called, old Waite was the first; he gave a brief statement of Miss Palermo, once being in their house, employed as a saleswoman about five years before, and of Delano's charges against her and what followed. The same was testified to by the other proprietors, then Mrs. Delano was called,

She was a well-meaning woman, rather handsome, but of the coarse, florid type; she wore deep expensive mourning. She had suffered so much from her husband's neglect and ill treatment of herself and children that she had nothing in her heart but bitterness and hate toward the woman who she thought alienated her husband's affections from her, although knowing the truth, as Nina in her interview with her told her all. Also aware that her husband was a bad man, and a libertine, she blamed Nina for his death, and she would prosecute her to the fullest extent of the law; she would never rest until she would either hang or send her to prison for life. She stated that while she was not divorced from Delano, they had not lived together for nearly three years, but he had supported herself and children during that time; she blamed Nina Palermo for their separation.

At the close of the inquest, Mrs. Sloan was discharged and Nina Palermo was remanded back to prison to be held for trial, for being a supposed party to the killing of Roscoe Delano. Gene, on hearing this sentence grew white to his ears, his eyes blazed, and he jumped to his feet trembling from head to foot. I sat like one paralyzed, my heart seeming to still its motion, but I recovered enough to shake my head at him. Bertram with a pale face, rose and went over to where he stood, and whispered a few words in his ear. All the color left Madame's face, which was already worn and pinched, and her form tall, straight and slender as a girl's, seemed to have shrunken as she reached over and took Nina's hand in her's.

Nina leaned back in her chair and dropped her eyelids as if she were tired of the whole business. Mrs. Lunis broke out into a fresh burst of weeping. Poor thing, she scarcely did anything else since the morning I brought her word of Delano's death. Nina was taken back to the precinct, where she remained until the next day, when she was taken to the Jefferson Market jail. She was given the best room in the house, and was made as comfortable as money and her friends could make her in a

prison. Madame Sloan begged to be allowed to remain with her, but she was denied that privilege.

"You will go home, with mother and Gene," said Nina, "and from henceforth whatever befalls me, mother's home will be your home. Now dear mother dry your tears, I shall be free in a few days, as soon as Bertram, can arrange for my bond." And she put her arms around her mother's neck. "Then I will be so glad dear sweet mother to go home, with you," and she laid her lovely tired head, on Mrs. Lunis's shoulder, "Yourself, Madame Sloan, and myself, and Gene, will all live together, no more big houses, no more striving for the admiration, and eclat, of the world, ah, God, how empty it all is, this world, worship, mother. Yes, I will be with those I love, and those who have true loving hearts, for me. What happiness mother, there is yet in store for us, for me mother. Ah, God, what mistakes we make."

"Oh, my poor girl, my Nina, surely there must be some happiness in the world for you." And her mother kissed her temples, her hair, and pressed her head to her bosom. "It's not right or just for them to keep you here. I could take my oath, that you never harmed a hair of that villain Delano's head. The time has come if the law, or court, insists upon keeping you here, I will keep my peace no longer, and justice must be done you."

"Mother dear, we will have to be patient, go now with Madame, and Gene, and Mr. Osgood, and get something nice to eat, and have some nice dinner, sent to me. Bertram, will have all my jewels deposited in De Coute's bank, Mr. Osgood, have the house guarded."

"Yes, it's in charge of the police now."

"I would like Madame, and mother, to pack all my clothes, and have them taken home, then you can sort out what I shall need here. Bertram, and Mr. Osgood, and Gene, will attend to the house, and see that the windows and doors, are locked and barred, and men, set to guard it until I can have my paintings, and books, and all my art treasures removed."

With bleeding hearts, we took leave of her, and I in-

vited Gene, and Madame, and his mother, to dinner to the nearest restaurant, and ordered the best dinner I could think of to be sent to Nina. I did not go back to the jail that night, I felt worn out, and my heart, was heavy and sore, at the turn of affairs. Gene was right, he knew as he said, the temper of the New York people, better than I. After dinner, I bid them all good-by, and took the cars home. It was nearly eight o'clock in the evening, when I reached my room, and I went immediately to bed.

The morning papers, published in full all the statements of the witnesses, both for the prosecution and the defense, it showed that Delano's two partners, and Mrs. Delano, were the prosecution, not the State alone, had it been left to the State, it would have been different with Nina. Old Waite's statement, was dwelt upon as one rolls a sweet morsel under one's tongue, and for weeks every morning, and evening, long garbled accounts of the poor girl's life, were given to the public. They even hinted that Eugene Lunis, would have to give a clear account of his whereabouts the night of the killing of Delano, as it was well known he was not at home, and that he had more than a brother's regard for his beautiful adopted sister, and also he was heard to have sworn vengeance, against Delano, when she left home.

Day by day, the papers built up a wall of suspicion, which hedged her in and around, and about. The weeks went by, and Bertram failed to liberate her on bond, he and De Coute, offered an unusually large sum, but the court, put them off on the ground of some technicality. She was a woman, therefore considered dangerous. However the State having a poor case was held back, by the combined influence of the other side. Bertram, was looked upon with suspicion as being Nina's lover, therefore his lawyer advised him to keep in the background, all he could, as it would be better for the Countess's case.

Madame Sloan, went every day, to the prison, bringing with her a basket of good things, prepared for her by her mother, and stayed nearly all day. Mrs. Lunis, came later, and she and Madame would then leave for

home, towards evening. Gene came as soon as he swallowed his supper, and Nina's pale face, would gladden, with a smile which chased for a while the sadness, which had now become habitual to it, and her eyes, would brighten with the affection, and love, that leaped up from her heart, and shone out from under the long lashes, as she rose from her seat holding out both hands to him. The evenings spent with her, as they were mostly left to themselves, Bertram coming in the afternoon, and leaving before Gene arrived, were the sweetest, he had ever known. Sad they were, and painful a pain that cut him to the quick, as he thought of the wrongs, injustices, and outrages, which had been heaped upon her.

Since the death of Delano, Gene had grown older by years, had grown to the full stature of a man, his love for his adopted sister, had thrown off all the grosser elements, all that savored of carnal passion, and had become finer, purer, and deeper, and more enduring. The tender romantic affection, of the boy, for the little girl, as they grew up side by side, day by day, mingled with the greater and more protecting love, of the strong man. Like the heart of the mother, whose tendrils twine about the loved babe, she carries in her arms, and nestles close to her bosom. So the man's heart, in Gene, felt all the aches, and pangs, for this adopted sister, whose fate he felt was so strangely cruel.

The eye of the libertine, had rested upon her beauty, before she was out of her teens, he desired her, she was poor, and who dare say no, she was for him, what if he did smirch the lily, that was his privilege, ha, ha. Moralists, and purest, might talk as they please it was all prate, what were they put here for, but for man, ha, ha. Don't the Bible tell us so.

Yes, the villain, had stripped her by a foul lie, of what is most sacred and dear to woman, her good name, and woven a net of circumstances about her, until now even his death, was laid at her door, and for it she was held a prisoner. Well he knew what he would do at the trial, she would never go back to prison, no never. He had laid his plans before Mr. Arlington and his attorney.

He was under suspicion as being her confederate, he could make use of the fact, that he was away from home that evening, Will Jones knew that he was at the working man's club, he walked home with him, to the very door, but he would keep out of the way, when he knew what he was going to do to save Nina.

If all the circumstances went against her, he would give himself up and say, he killed Delano. He would leave his mother in her care, Nina had plenty, and she would never know but what he killed Delano, to avenge her. They would grieve for him, he knew, his mother, especially, but when they thought how he died, to save her, and to avenge her, it would be a solace, and a comfort, and at the farthest the time would not be long, until they would follow him. Yes, he was glad the villain Delano, was out of the way, the hand that slayed him, conferred a benefit upon humanity, and in his heart, he blessed that hand. She should never go to prison, no never.

Bertram, called every afternoon, at the prison, about half-past two, staying until after six in the evening. They had much to talk about. Every day she showed him, some new side of her real character, her quiet proud heroism, in this awful trial, astonished him, and set him to thinking. Brought up as he was surrounded by wealth, and all the refinements, and culture of an old family, he had never known women, only as the petted darlings of his class. He knew Nina had suffered, and was persecuted, and the story of her life, touched him as being so exceedingly romantic. The mistress of a great house, the daughter, in wedlock, of an old titled nobleman but shut out by circumstances over which she had no control, from her rightful place in society. And now those same circumstances had woven a web about her, until it held her a prisoner in its meshes, and the death of her persecutor was laid at her door.

Yet an innocent victim, how sweetly, calmly, bravely, she bore all, without a murmur or complaint. Yes, he loved her, he had desired her above all other women, that he had ever known or seen. He craved for her daily, and hourly, he longed to possess her to hold her

in his arms, and call her his. While Bertran. was in no sense a libertine, while no crime of that kind could be laid against him, or had any woman, ever been betrayed by him, or was he a sensualist in its grosser sense, he had all the desires and strong passions, of a healthy young man, of his wealth and position, and he believed the seeking and gratification of them was his right and privilege.

But day by day, as he sat by her side, and she began to lean more and more upon him, and look to him, for help in this great crisis of her life. As she grew whiter, and her smile gladdened to a blush which swept over her cheek at his coming, and a light shone in the lovely dark eyes, which made his heart leap to his throat, the first time he saw it. Then Bertram's love, changed to something higher, purer, tenderer, and finer, taking a deeper hold upon his heart. The whole man was lifted up, out of his grosser self, and ennobled by the heroism of this young woman. I do not mean to say that the love he bore her, was like the love of Gene.

Oh, no, the two men were of an entirely different nature. There was still self, sense, and passion, in Bertram's love, but Gene's was of the soul, the spirit. It would have made no difference to him, whether she was the daughter of a nobleman or a serf, whether she had a penny to her name, it was the same to him. She was Nina, the companion of his childhood, he did not know the day he did not love her, and this love had grown, and grown, through all the years the refining process of sorrow, and suffering, and trials ; until he was ready to lay down his life for her. "He that saves his life, shall lose it, and he that loses his life, shall find it again."

I called myself every day, upon Nina, going to the prison, an hour or two later than Bertram, I generally found him there, and we would leave together. She was always pleased to see me considering me one of her near friends. She informed me one day, that Gene, had great affection for me, and that he had said to her, that "Beverly Osgood was one of the men, it would do to bet one's life on." I thanked her and said, "That I could return the compliment."

The morning Oswald de Coute was carried home to Malmarda, so wounded, he confessed everything to his wife, of his past before his marriage, and his liaison with Mrs. Leroy Johnathan, as we men, generally do when our past, and its deeds, return back upon us. It is always to the poor wife, deceived, neglected, and to whom they have been fickle and false that they turn in distress. He told her his suspicions, and who he was positive he had a glimpse of in the Countess's grand saloon as he sat playing at cards, in the library. He begged her forgiveness, said he was a wretch, and deserved all he got.

The lovely Jeanette, who was in every sense womanly, and imbued with the finest of feminine tact, felt that this was the turning point, in her husband's life, to show a disposition to resent his sins against her, by a cold unforgiving manner, would be to estrange all their future years. He was her husband, the father of her child, she must make the best of things, and the best man, she could of him. So freely she forgave him, put her arms about his neck, where he lay, on the sofa, in their room, with his head bandaged. Little Clarise, who was called for Clarise Cline, and who was the image of her father, seeing that something unusual was going on between her parents, quit her play, and toddled up to her father, "Papa, wuss," she said, looking up gravely at her mother. Her father drew her to him, and wound his arms, about her, and kissed her, then husband and wife and child sealed the new covenant with a kiss. De Coute told his wife a good deal about Nina, and said, he thought her acquittal in the coming trial, would depend much upon his testimony.

He said nothing of the relationship in which Bertram held the Countess, only that he was her attorney, and an admirer, as they all were. It was left to Bertram, himself, to speak to his sister Jeanette, and tell her the story, of Nina, and Delano, and his own part in it, how he first met her, and how on longer acquaintance he became deeply interested in her, he spoke of his love for her, that his life was bound up in hers, and as soon as she was acquitted which of course she would be, he hoped

to make her his wife. He begged her to make no mention of what he had disclosed to her, to Clarise, at present, he requested her to go with him, to visit the Countess, indeed he wished her, to accompany him as soon as possible. "I do not feel like a man, or a gentleman, Jeanette," he said, "if some of the women of my family, do not visit this beautiful, gifted, and wronged girl. Of course I can't speak of this to Maud, or mother, they are so cold, and strait-laced."

"Why Bertram, certainly, I shall be only delighted after what you have imparted to me, to go with you." And when she spoke of her intention to accompany her brother, to the jail, to visit the Countess, to De Coute, he said, putting more energy into his words, than she had ever known him to do:

"Of course, my dea, to be sua,—betta go as soon as you can get your hat on." And she did the following morning, after Bertram and herself had the talk about the Countess.

She left Malmarda, about ten o'clock, for New York, where she met Bertram, at his office, lunched with him, at half-past one, and was at the prison, by half after two. Jeanette was completely captured by Nina, and vice versa. And this lovely queenly distinguished-looking woman, was Bertram's sister, and Oswald de Coute's wife, thought Nina, as she sat at Jeanette's side, and Jeanette's rich, mellow voice, carried the healing balm, of sympathy in every word. And Nina, bore up bravely all through her visit. They were charmed with each other, Jeanette's tact and delicacy, being fully appreciated by Nina.

"Why Bertram, my brother," said Jeanette, when they reached the pave, "why haven't you spoken to me of her, before this, what cowards you men, are. She's lovely, divine, she's unlike any woman I have ever seen, what a face, what eyes, and brow. The whole story of her life, is written on that broad blue-veined brow, and speaks out of those wonderful dark eyes. I never saw such eyes, their expression at first glance, made me think of a wounded antelope or of one of Moore's gazelle's, then as I spoke with her they varied in soulful intelligence.

You men can't see farther than your noses, you are all sense, can't grasp anything ; or you would have told me all about her before this, I could have been such a friend to her, I will be now. Oh, how awful to keep her in that jail, Delano was a monster, a horrid monster."

" Tell Clarise, why not ? Of course I shall tell Clarise, all about her, there's where you men are moral cowards, again, blind and vain. Do you think, that women, who live on the plane of myself, and Clarise, have any room, for petty mean jealousies in our hearts, oh, Bertram, how little you know Clarise. Do you think that you are deceiving her, not at all, believe me she would only be glad to tender kindness to any one who you would care for." So she rattled on to her brother, until he seated her, in the railroad carriage for home, and bid her good-by. She told him, she would be in New York again, in a few days to visit the Countess.

I called upon Madame Deveraux, and related to her Nina's whole story, leaving nothing out. My Lady, sat and listened, with deep interest, at times she turned pale, and the long dark lashes of her soulful eyes, dipped in the tears, they refused to shed, and made misty the heavenly light, which shone in them. When I finished my recount, she rose up, and began pacing the floor, for a while she walked in silence, then crossed her arms, over her bosom, a habit with her.

" My Heavenly Father," she cried, " will the old Jewish law, be ever eradicated from men's hearts? The cry to stone women, still goes on. When Christ, struck the shackles from the wrists, of the adulterous woman, and the chains from her feet, by the words: ' He that be without sin first cast a stone at her,' He made all women free, and for eighteen hundred years, she has been fighting old laws, old prejudices, which enslave her, and the men, go on stoning her, and we go on beating our heads, against the stone walls of their hearts, for freedom, freedom to do, to act, to have some voice in the law, they demand of us to keep. Shall they ever think of us, but as their prey, beings to torture, to crush, to stone, if we do not submit to their will. I thank thee blessed Lord Christ, that I am free in thee, which is to

be free indeed. Perhaps dear," she said, seating herself, again, "this is the price your lovely friend is to pay for freedom. Yes gladly and willingly, will I go with you on the morrow to visit this noble girl.

And on the morning we went to the prison I was to meet my Lady at the home, and we were to go from there. I had spoken several times to Nina of my friend Madame Deveraux, a woman of great prominence, position and wealth, who left all to follow in the walks of the Master. I had also asked her permission a few days before to fetch her to visit her, and she gladly gave her consent.

Never shall I forget the meeting between these two women. My Lady as she entered the door of Nina's cell, stretched out her arms, Nina rose and stood a second, gazing in wonder upon my Lady's face, then laid her hand upon her heart.

"Ah, dear God," she cried, "you know how it hurts here, how I have suffered, how I suffer, how I have been humbled, humiliated, into the very mud of the earth."

She staggered toward her, then stopped, and covered her face with her hands, and burst into weeping, the first tears she had shed since the night of her meeting with Gene, after four years.

My Lady took her in her arms, and laid her head on her bosom, a bosom where beat the loving Christ-heart, and she let Nina weep her fill.

"Ah, dear child," she said, caressingly, "these tears are just the thing for your poor burning eyes and parched heart. Has no one spoken or hinted at what you needed most? Perhaps I am the physician who will apply the right medicine. After Nina had wept her fill, my Lady took her handkerchief and dried her eyes, led her to a chair and seated herself beside her. Gradually and gently she administered food to the girl's starved heart; sweetly she spoke of things that were strange and new, not new, but old as the hills, old as eternity. Nina's quick understanding caught and grasped their meaning, for she was soul hungry.

And Nina listened with open eyes and ears, until she forgot herself, her suffering, her prison cell, the world,

and the things of the world. And the color came to her cheeks, and the light to her eyes, the reflected light of my Lady's.

"As the apostle Paul said to the Greeks," continued Madame Deveraux, "'A more excellent way, I show unto thee.' This way brings sweet peace, a peace undreamed of, rest and joy to mind and heart. A way that these prison walls will be as no barrier to your freedom. You are here by no act of yours, and you will be out soon, I hope. This way is also power, you have sought and tasted of what the material world has to give, you find that with all your triumphs, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

"I speak to you of this way, because I see you have a receptive mind, you possess intelligence of a high order. You are paying the price here in this prison cell, and through this you can enter in, but you must seek the door, there is but one door, and that Christ Jesus. Then peace, rest, joy, happiness, and power, untold will be yours. But you must pray, throw off the old worn garments, the filthy rags which we cling so to, 'The old symbols,' as Carlyle says, 'which have long ago become useless, and meaningless. Old rubbish, that men burden their own and other men's backs with, and hinder their coming into the truths, the light of God, truth and liberty.'"

As she grew eloquent, Nina's eyes grew wider and more luminous, she drank in the older woman's words like a man, who after a long walk of miles on a dusty road of a summer's day, he comes to a cool running stream, and he quenches his thirst with the waters thereof. They were bread to her hungry heart, and water to her thirsty soul.

"You are but a babe yet, dear child, you will bear no more now."

"Oh, yes," cried Nina, "talk on, I can listen to you all day. What you say is new, and so beautiful and true. Not so new either, for I have felt something like what you have spoken of in my soul, just but a feeble fluttering spark, trying to break through the hard layers of materialism which crusts it over. I am so delighted

dear Lady" (Nina called her Lady), " that Mr. Osgood brought you; I never had much religion, never pretended to much. I was reared in the Roman Catholic faith, but never lived up to it."

" Dear, don't mistake me, I love the churches, whatever church in which you think you can best serve God, the Father, and His Son the blessed Lord Christ, go to that church. The way I speak of is personal, a more excellent way, but few seek to find and understand it, few reach it. The Saviour said, ' I tell you the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' "

" I would like you to come again, dear Lady," said Nina, " I wish to hear more of these truths, teach me, I so long to find peace. You have rested me already, soothed and comforted me, and given me hope; I feel as if I would sleep to-night. I haven't slept since the night of the awful tragedy at my house."

" Poor child, put that out of your mind, think of it only as an invisible law, but an inexorable one, which pursued that man until he paid the penalty of his crimes. The law of the State did not reach him, or punish him, but the law of the universe, and the moral law of God did. Put him from you, put him out of your life; seek forgetfulness of the old in the new. Dear child, the day will come in the light and joy of the spiritual, the memory of this man shall be blotted out of your existence, as though he had never been. Now let us kneel in prayer."

And Nina, Countess Palermo, the proud queen of the gay world, bent her knee in prayer, the first time since a child, when she knelt at her mother's knee and lisped the Lord's prayer. Never did I hear such a prayer as Madame poured forth, never shall I forget it until I part with my last breath. Her wonderful voice rang out in clear, flute-like swells, which seemed to float up, and down, and about, and fill her cell with a musical rhythm of tones.

Nina fell upon her face and wept. I shook like a leaf in a storm, but my Lady prayed on. She prayed that Christ the Lord would awaken the dead soul in this child, in this beautiful young woman, that she would

throw off the garments of flesh, though they were of the most costly of earth's fabrics, they were after all but rags, old worn rags, and clothe her anew with sight, and life, a living soul. For in you dear Lord there is light, life, grace, sweetness, happiness, and love. Your truths are high as the heavens, broad as the universe, and their depths no man can fathom

When we rose from our knees we all felt better, and when we came to take our leave, Nina hung about my Lady's neck, begging her to come again, and thus two souls, in a reciprocal affection were drawn together, both having the same components, but one developed and the other undeveloped. And thus a friendship was sealed which lasted until one of them crossed over to the border land, to the unseen shore. As we passed through the public hall of the prison, we met two police officers. "By the buttons on your coat, Hollern," said one of them, "there's that Madam Deveraux. I bet she's after the soul of that Countess, Mr. Delano's swell mistress."

"Hish-s-s," whispered the other who was the older of two, "sure it's behind the bars the same Madame ought to be, sure she's demented herself running after them weman."

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRIAL.

October, with its golden days, deep blue skies, silvery clouds, floating in thin veils of mist, days when the trees in the parks turned their sear, and yellow leaves, to be kissed by cool soft winds, that came up from the sea, laden with the fragrance of harvest grains, ripe fruits, from farms, orchards, and vineyards. The Hudson flowed on, between banks, hills, and mountains, of brown and russet, and deep ravines where purple shadows lurked.

White sails glided up and down its surface, and great steamers, and ships from all countries and climes, came up from the wide ocean, and anchored in the Bay. And Nature so old, yet ever so young, went on in its quiet, silent loveliness, decking itself in garments beautiful, and taking no heed of man, his passions, strifes, and ambitions.

But the great Babylon by the sea, with its teeming material life, swept hither and thither, north and south, east and west. "The great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth, have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth, have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." Revelation, Chapter XVII, verse 2. The Sodom and Gomorrah of the western hemisphere. As the month drew to a close and each day, brought us nearer the presidential election, until at last the thirtieth of October, came and went, a day never to be forgotten by me. The streets, in the whole vast city, hung with the stars and stripes. They floated on the tops of high buildings, up in the sunlight; they floated from the schoolhouses, church spires, steamers, and great ships, which anchored in the Bay. I strained my eyes, until weary, trying to make out that strange bird, which wrapped its great wings about the dear old flag, emblem of liberty, the free and the brave, until it hides the red, white and blue. That bird is no eagle; no man ever carried that yellow thing in the war of independence, or in the civil war, or did its pinions ever wave in the breeze for man's independence, or in the smoke and fire of battle. Its color means hate, strife, jealousy, and tyranny. Oh, my country, the nearest, and dearest, to my heart, have fought and died, for that flag. The dear older brother, twenty years older, with whom I played when a child, laid down his life carrying the stars and stripes, after Sherman, at the battle of Shiloh. I turned my aching eyes away, for my heart is sick, so sick at the sight of that yellow bird, knowing it to be the death-blow to men's liberty. I would rather see that old flag trailed in the dust of the streets, than that any political party,

should smirch its meaning, and purity, with an emblem of their creed.

The presidential election came and went, and the man at Canton went in, no one doubted it that had eyes to see. November with its cool, soft, hazy Indian summer, drifted to the shorter days of December before Nina was brought to trial, and then it was only by the combined efforts of Bertram, his father, Oswald de Coute, and his father, Madame Deveraux, and a few of the most prominent families of New York, friends of hers.

The morning of the trial arrived at last; the day was cold and cloudy, but dry, no snow had yet fallen. The courtroom was packed with people, not in the habit of visiting courtrooms, out of idle curiosity, but the most aristocratic in the State. It was true, all wanted to get a glimpse of the beautiful Countess, but hundreds of men, and women, had to be turned away, and no one admitted except those having tickets. The jury were all picked men, holding good positions in the city. The judge was a noted criminal lawyer, before his admission to the judiciary bench.

All the men, with myself, who were present at the shooting of Roscoe Delano, were on time, and took their seats on the witness-stand in the front row, not leaving Sam the butler out. Madame Deveraux, Mrs. Marstan, the lovely Jeanette, and her mother, who rose to the occasion through love of her son, and her daughter's influence. Then came Nina, with the sheriff walking beside her, and accompanied by her mother, Gene, and Madame Sloan, and behind them was Ann Simms, the house-keeper, and with her a young woman, another domestic in the employ of the Countess, and last of all, Miranda, the colored cook. A dead silence fell over the courtroom, every whisper ceased, every voice was hushed, and every eye turned upon Nina, as she came in cold, proud, and queenly, wrapped in costly seal furs, and took her seat among her friends and witnesses.

She wore the same black trailing robe she wore the day of the inquest, and the little black bonnet. When she unfastened and threw back her mantle, it showed a bunch of hothouse lilies, pinned in the bosom of her

corsage. She had not been well for weeks, a deeper sadness rested upon her face, so white that it vied with the lilies on her bosom, and expressed itself in every line of her features. In the white noble brow, in the great eyes, which looked like deep dark wells, and the blue shadows, underneath them. Yet she was never more beautiful, a new life had awakened in her, a new secret had been revealed to her heart, a hidden joy, never before known, nestled like a dove in her breast. The divine spirit had touched her soul, and shone in the wonderful light in her eyes.

Madame Sloan, under her mantle of fur, wore black; her fair, delicate face, looking pinched and worn. Mrs. Lunis, during the weeks of Nina's imprisonment, had grown thin, her cheeks had lost their color, and her bright blue eyes had become dim from weeping, looked really handsome in a new black gown and bonnet, and an Astrakhan fur mantle. Gene held his own with the rest of the gentlemen present; he wore a black suit, fitting him well, and his linen was immaculate. Nina had no reason to be ashamed of her adopted mother and brother. Frank Boyington's eyes took in Gene's whole make-up, but with the best of feeling. He pitted himself against Gene. Gene did not belong to swelldom, that was sure, that is to say, he thought he was not just his class, and a big city like New York, draws the class line of men and women, but for all, he was a fine, handsome, manly-looking fellow.

To my left was seated Mrs. Delano, with her counsel, old Waite, and the two partners of the house, and several other ladies. Her widow's weeds toned down somewhat her usual floridity, but her face wore a hard, unrelenting expression, mingled with cruelty, as only a woman can be cruel, and as she sat there, she was Nina's implacable foe. In her heart, she despised her husband; for years, he had tortured, and neglected her, but woman-like, she hated his victims, more than she did him. And now she watched Nina with jealous eyes, and only saw in her, a bad, designing woman, who had alienated and stolen her husband's love. She would punish her, yes, she would see her hang; nothing would make her believe,

but that she fired the shot, which killed Delano. She had gotten all the money she wanted out of him, that was his only redeeming trait, his lavishness of money. She wished to rid herself of him, so that she could marry Bertram Arlington. This was the substance of her thoughts, and what she had all along given to her counsel, to the press, and her friends, and all with whom she spoke during the weeks that intervened between the coroner's inquest and the trial.

The first witness called was Chester Harding. He stated his name, age, residence and profession. "I have had the honor," he began in a quiet, manly voice, that was pleasant to the ear, "on several occasions to be the guest of the Countess Palermo. On the night of the unhappy occurrence, which was the first of her 'At Homes,' given after her return from Long Branch, we had been playing whist in the library. The Countess did not play, but sat awhile watching the game, then rose and seated herself at the piano, where she executed some charming sonatas. Then she took up her violin, and gave us two or three fine solos, while we played several games. At the conclusion of the third or fourth game, we rose at Madame Sloan's request, and went into the grand salon, while the butler laid the cloth in the library.

"Isn't it customary on occasions of that kind, to have the spread in the dining-room?" asked the lawyer for the State.

"I believe such things are governed by the taste of the hostess," answered Harding, quickly. "Continue your statement, Mr. Harding," said the counsel for the defence.

"In a short while the guests were called back to the library, where we all took the same seats around the table, we occupied at cards, the Countess seating herself between Mr. Arlington and Mr. Osgood. We hadn't been seated more than ten minutes, when I heard the front door open, and in a few seconds Mr. Roscoe Delano came into the library. I was not in the least surprised to see Mr. Delano enter the Countess's house, in that unceremonious manner, for on every occasion

that it was my pleasure to be present at Miss Palermo's 'At Homes' he came in without asking leave, or license, and about the same hour, leaving often before the company dispersed.

"The Countess's friends seemed to pay little heed to his coming and going, in that way, thinking it simply an eccentricity of the man. Mr. Delano was seated by the butler, at the upper end of the table, between Mr. de Coute and Chauncy Willis, the artist. I was seated at the lower end of the table, facing Delano, and with my back to the door leading into the hall. I could not see into the grand salon. Mr. Delano had been sipping a dish of ice cream, when he called to the butler to fill his glass again, which he did. Mr. Delano then rose to drink the health of the company, and as he did he held up his glass. I saw nothing, heard nothing, no noise or footsteps, but quicker than thought, a flash, a bang, a whiss-ss-ss, and three shots were fired in succession, and Mr. Delano fell dead, shot to the heart, one of the shots wounding Mr. de Coute. The Countess Palermo never left her chair, from the time she first took her seat at the supper table, where she sat with her back to the grand salon, where the shots came from that killed Roscoe Delano. I saw her lying, when the smoke cleared away, on the floor of the library, in a dead swoon. The company were all gentlemen, they are all present in the court-room, the ladies were the Countess herself, and Madame Sloan, her companion, who was seated to my left at the foot of the table, and the servants of the Countess's household. No one in that room, or inmate of the house, had anything to do with the killing of Roscoe Delano, or desired to harm him in the least."

The attorneys on both sides, put Mr. Harding through a siege of cross-questioning, which but weakened the prosecution. Nina smiled her approval on Chester Harding, as he left the stand and took his seat. Frank Boyington was next summoned; he gave his name, age, place of birth, his own and his father's occupation. He stated in substance what Harding had, only he was more impulsive, and passionate in his utterance, eager to impress judge, and jurors, of Nina's innocence. Therefore he

got himself tangled up once or twice, but he was quick as lightning to cut himself loose, and not stopping to unravel, he picked up the thread he dropped and went on. He told the whole story from beginning to end. The usual cross-examination followed, and Frank Boyington was dismissed.

Morrison Siles was the next witnesss. All heads were craned, as his tall, distinguished figure, with its artistic personality, rose and took his place on the witness stand. He stated that he was a native of New York State, and an artist by profession. He had known the Countess Nina Palermo, nearly three years. She first called at his studio on his reception day, as was customary for ladies of the highest social position. When she made her first call, she was then living in apartments, No. —— West —— Street. Later she moved to her residence West 80—S—Street. "During my acquaintance with her, I have never seen anything in her house, or conduct, but that of the most refined, delicate, and virtuous woman, and I have the *entree* socially, to some of the best houses, in this city. I consider Nina, Countess Palermo exceptional in her conduct for a lady of her wealth, rank, youth, and beauty. I know a cloud hangs over her young life, but I believe, in fact I know her to have been and to still be a persecuted woman, and she had borne her wrongs, and persecutions, with a heroism, which only a woman of unusual and exceptional delicacy and character can." Then he related what the others had, only in a more concise form. "The Countess Palermo sat at my right," he continued, "between Mr. Arlington, and Mr. Osgood, when the assassin's bullet struck Mr. Roscoe Delano, and I would as soon think of my own mother having anything to do with the killing of Delano, as I would the Countess Palermo."

After a severe cross-questioning by the State attorney, that he was fully equal to, and which helped Nina's case wonderfully with the Court and jurors, he was dismissed. Nina's eyes were filled with tears, as she looked up in Morrison Siles's face and thanked him with a smile, that stirred his heart to the core with sympathy. He took his seat.

Chauncy Willis was then summoned, his statement was the same, as Morrison Siles's but not so effective. After a short cross-examination he was dismissed, and Madame Sloan was led to the witness-box. Her tall, slim figure, her ladylike appearance, and the whole *ensemble* of her attire attracted all eyes. She was very pale, as she stated to the Court and jury, in a cool, clear voice, her name, age, and that she was a native of the State of New Jersey, but had spent the greater portion of her days in New York City. She had seen the seamy side of life, she told them, and its sunny, also. She had met with a great many reverses and ups and downs, since her widowhood.

She had always been desirous of bettering her condition; as things grew worse with her, she had kept a strict watch over the columns of the daily papers, thinking she would run across something that would be suitable to her age, and capacity, such as a governess to children, or a companion to a young lady. Her search was at last rewarded, by seeing the Countess's advertisement in the Tribune and World. She related then her calling on Nina, and her engagement to come the following morning. "And I left her charmed and glad in my heart, that I had found a home, and so pleased, with my young charge.

"And from that day to this," she went on in a voice broken with emotion, "which is over two years, although a dependent, for I was very poor, at the time I saw her advertisement in the Tribune, I am of good family, I know what it is to have plenty of this world's goods, and to enjoy social position, no daughter could be better to me than she. She has crept into my heart, gentlemen," here the dear woman broke down and wept. Mrs. Lunis wept, and the tears stood in Gene's eyes, Bertram bowed his head, to hide his emotion, and I followed suit, and one could have heard a pin drop in the audience. "Yes, gentlemen, of the jury," she continued, wiping her eyes, "she has crept into my heart until I could lay down my life for her. I am acquainted with her whole history as she is with mine; I know how she has suffered, how she has been persecuted by Delano,

how patiently she has borne everything, not wishing to bring her name before the public in a scandal.

"Didn't Mr. Delano make the Countess's residence his home?" asked the counsel for the prosecution.

The counsel for the defense jumped to his feet, and said the question was irrelevant, but the Court allowed it.

"I mean didn't he consider it his home, didn't he have his room there, and sleep there occasionally?"

"There was plenty of room in the Countess's residence, to accomodate several persons at a time, if the Countess chose to have them remain over night. But never to my knowledge, and I was the last to retire, as the Countess left the closing of the house to me, and my room was next to hers, Mr. Delano never remained in the house over night, nor was he ever admitted any farther than the library, dining-room, and the drawing-room. But he came every evening, as the witnesses before me stated, and the gentlemen present at the reception the night of the tragedy, all knew his way of coming and going.

"The truth is he was madly, insanely in love with the Countess; she is the only woman, of his many victims, who thwarted him in his wishes. Her intelligence, intellect, and natural purity of character, met his baser passions at every step, and it crazed him with a sort of despairing jealousy. He was a bad man, and I often thought more likely to have killed her, than she him. I have heard the Countess beg and plead with him, to leave her, to put her from his mind, or any thought of his ever gaining her affection, and go home to his family. That he had wronged, and persecuted her enough, but he wouldn't, and now this awful tragedy, this man's death, to be laid at her door; it's cruel, it's horrible, it's not true," she cried, her pale cheeks flushing, her blue eyes, seeming to emit sparks of flame, and her tall, spare figure, shook with the emotion, she could not control.

"The idea that she ever hurt, or planned to hurt, Roscoe Delano, is absurd, opposed to the girl's whole nature. These gentlemen here," and she swept her thin, white hand, in the direction of where we all were seated, were the only frequenters of her house, and she could

not plan with them. She had no lady friends, but her adopted mother, and myself, and the women servants of her household. That vile man, cast a dark blur on her youth, which debarred her from the social place which is rightfully hers, but God is good, He has raised up friends of her own station to her."

Then she gave her version of the evening's happenings, which accorded with the other witnesses, and after a brief questioning by both counsels, she took her seat.

Samson, the butler, was the next. Sam was a dark copper-color, of medium height, well-formed, and was dressed within an inch of his life. His linen vied with any gentleman present, in the whiteness and polish of its cuffs, collar, and ample display of shirt-front. He stated his age, thirty years, that he was born in Nashville, Tenn., his father and mother, had been slaves, he had lived in New York City, for twelve years, and his occupation was that of butler.

"Ise lived six yares wid Mista Kearns, befo' his family went to Eu'op'. Ise ben two yares wid Madame de Countess Palermo, yes sah." Then in his own original way, he recounted the killing of Delano.

"Yes, sah, Ise knows Mista Roscoe Delano, he comes ebery night, to Madame de Countess's house, Ise seed him ebery time 'cepden my two evenings off, den Mrs. Simms de housekeeper, tended to de doa, yes sah. Mista Delano, he felt his se'f privileged, he opened de doa, wid his latch-key, an' he come in wid a great blast, a swingin' de heavy front doa to. Ise alway heered him, when he come, but mos' ob de time, de latch didn't catch. Some ob de time he went back when he hung up his hat, an' shet de doa, befo' goin' into de library, or de drawing-room.

"My ordas was dat if Mistiss was not down sta's to show him into de library, I mos' alway went afta him, to de front doa, to see if it was shet, ebery little while or so, Ise fin' de latch not catched, yes, sah. De night ob Madame de Countesses 'At Home,' I fo'got to go to de doa, afta Mista Delano came. Ise can't say as Ise fog'ot so much, as Ise was so busy waitin' on de gentlemen.

"Afta de shootin', Ise ran frough de salon pala, to de

front doa, an' gentlemen ob de jury, it was unlatched an' ajar about de width ob my han'," and he held up his hand to the jury. "As suah as Ise liben, yes sah. Ise ran into de hall, an' down de steps ob de basement hall, an' tried de front doa, dar, but it was locked. Ise ran into de dinin'-room, no one dar, Ise was jes' makin' fo' de kitchen when Miranda, de cook, came screamin' out, her face de whitest ob any nigga's can git, an' dat's jes' like ashes. 'Fo' de love ob God, Sam,' she cried, 'who's ye's ben a-killen upstai's.' As Ise turned to go upstai's agin Ise met Mista Osgood, one ob de gentlemen ob de party, he was as white as a sheet. He asked me if Ise seed any one, or found anything. I say, 'no, sah,' an' when we went back to de library, Mista Delano was dead, an' Mr. de Coute, was bleedin' f'om a wound in his head.

"Ise ben de watchdog ob dat house, an' seed all dat went on in it, yes sah, ye's can't fool Sam Johnson, in a gentleman an' a lady, no sah. Ise no libe twelve yares in New Yawk City fo' nothin', an' six yares in a gentleman's house like Mista Kearns, whar Ise seed all de high-toned white folks ob New Yawk. Yes, sah, my mistiss, Madame de Countess, she a lady, she too good a woman, to hurt Mista Delano, or hab him hurt, neber did she do it, no sah, neber, Ise sware it a thousand times on de good book."

After Sam's cross-examination, the court adjourned for that day. It was not until the following morning, when the court convened, that Oswald de Coute's testimony was given. We were all in our places as on the first day of the trial. De Coute looked paler than his wont, when he took the witness stand, but I had not seen him, since the day of the coroner's inquest. The wound, on his temple had healed, leaving a slight scar, that his physician said, would disappear in the course of five or six months. He was as handsome and elegant as ever; he gave his name, age, place of birth, his present residence, his occupation, cashier of the bank of -----, his father's bank.

"I was at the Countess Palermo's house the night of the killing of Roscoe Delano," he began in his cool, lazy

drawl. "I was introduced to her nearly two years before, by my brother-in-law, Bertram Arlington, her attorney. I had accompanied my brother-in-law several times to her 'At Homes,' which I consider, gentlemen, as pleasant and *recherché*, as any small gatherings given in the city of New Yawk. We had not been seated long at suppa," he said, in his charming accent, "not more than ten or fifteen minutes, when Mr. Delano, who was seated at my right, and facing the Countess, rose to drink a health, he being a man of convivial habits.

"The Countess was seated with her back to the grand salon, I sat opposite to her, and could see into the grand salon, clear to its windows, which fronted the street, that is of course in a straight line. The hangings and drapery hid much from my view, and from my position, at the table, I could not see any one enter the salon, from the hall. Once or twice I thought I saw the shadow of a woman gliding behind the hangings, also her drapery, but thinking it some of the maids, who stole in to take a peep at the company, as maids often do, I paid no further attention. I happened to be a little hungry that night, and the butler Sam, who possesses all the geniality of his race, and is as courteous as a king, had a few moments before helped me to a dish of scalloped oysters, which I am very fond of, and was busily eating when Delano rose. I then raised my head, and saw distinctly a woman, leaning half-way from behind the silken drapery, which was partially wound about one of the pillars, and hung half loose from the middle of the pillars, which separated the grand salon, from the library. The drapery had caught in the hood of her long black cloak which was wrapped about her, brushing it back from her face, and for a second giving me a glimpse of her profile.

"Instantaneously, before I had time to think or to act, the hood was drawn over her face, and a white hand was raised and a pistol suddenly fired. I dipped my head, the shot struck me, just grazing my temple, making a flesh-wound," he brushed back the hair from his forehead, so the jurors could have a better view of the scar. "The other two shots, which came in quick succession, struck Delano, and when the smoke cleared away, I

raised my head, I was bleeding profusely, and Delano was dead, shot to the heart."

A silence like that of death, fell over the whole audience, the jurors stared with open eyes, and open mouths. Jeanette and her mother looked at Bertram, who had leaned over to hear every word, thinking his ears had tricked him, in some way, for Oswald had never mentioned that part of seeing the woman to him. He had however, to his wife, the day he was brought home wounded, and made his confession to her. Madame Deveraux's beautiful eyes, shone full of the light of rejoicing, as she rested them on Nina, who sat with folded hands, as if transfixed, her face, like the marble Venus of Milo's, with large, hollow eyes, showing surprise and wonder. I turned my glance in the direction where Mrs. Delano and her company were seated. All the color had fled from Mrs. Delano's cheek, her face had aged, but there was no softening in its hard, relentless expression. Old Waite was a tallow color, and his small gray eyes, shone with a cynical malignant fierceness. The other two men, sat stolid and indifferent to all that went on.

"Your Honor, and gentlemen of the jury," resumed De Coute, "those shots were intended for me, not for Roscoe Delano. I recognized the woman's face, and as I caught her eye, it unnerved her for a moment, she saw that she was detected, and missed her aim. And I wish to make a little confession here to the Court, for the sake of justice; the wrong I did that woman, was long ago in my youth, but the wrong was not sufficient for her to have attempted my life. She neither lost her good name, wealth, nor social position by it." Here the counsel for the prosecution asked him to tell the name of the woman.

"Never," he answered, "if she ever attempts my life again, which I hardly think she will, as I learned she has left the country, I shall then bring her to justice. Now she must have entered by the front door, and escaped by it, as the butler testified he found it open."

After a more severe cross-examination than any other of the witnesses, he was dismissed. As he turned to leave the stand, the whole audience, the courtroom

being more densely crowded than the day before, rose *en masse*, and cheer after cheer, went up, and it was some time before the sheriff and the sergeant-at-arms, could restore order.

I glanced over at Gene, the whole expression of his face was changed from the set, rigid, haggard look, it had worn since the tragedy, to the old brightness and happy expression of other days. I had hoped to be called, and I intended to give the whole story, as I knew it, and was eyewitness to it, from the day I first rented the little parlor in Mrs. Lunis's apartments, until the shooting of Delano, but it seemed to be the policy of Nina's attorney not to summons Bertram or myself, until he saw how the case went, he would keep me in reserve for rebuttal. So the next one called was the prisoner, Nina, Countess Palermo, who had requested that she should be allowed to testify in her own behalf.

There was a rustle, a swish, a rustling, and rushing sound, all over that large audience, as she rose in her tall straight Venus-like beauty, and took her place in the witness-box. Then a silence fell over the court-room, a silence so great that one would think, not a breath was drawn, in that whole assembly of people. Her seal fur mantle hung half-way down her back, displaying her magnificent shoulders, and that wonderful black dress, with its tulle chiffon, silk and lace. Her face, well, I have written so much of it, that all I can say, this morning, it was the great dark eyes, that burned now with a new flame under the broad, low brow, white as Carrara marble.

She gave her name, her age, the suburban town near New York, where she was born, her father, and mother's name, and a short history already told in these pages of her father, Count Leanto Palermo, an exile in this country. And up to where she herself, entered the large dry-goods firm, where Delano was head manager of the floor she was on. "Had my own mother," she said, "or my adopted mother known the importance of the papers left by my father, for his only child, I need never have entered that house, as a salesgirl." She spoke

clearly and distinctly, her rich, mellow voice, reaching to every corner of the courtroom.

"It was in this large department house," she continued, untying the strings of her bonnet, "that my first lessons of the world, were learned. Here was a school of ethics, for the young woman, which sooner or later, is the death-clutch to all her romance, her high ideals, if she had any. It is a school," she went on, the color stealing into her cheek, "that if a girl has the strength to keep clear of the pitfalls and ditches, and look on and learn her lesson, she is the better able to fight the battles of life. But even the naturally virtuous-loving, are forced into the ditches, or to starve. I had been nearly three years in that house; I had been promoted several times, and my salary raised, not particularly by Mr. Delano, there were other managers under him; he might have been instrumental in my promotion, I know not.

"My first year there, I saw little of Delano; it was the second year, when I was sent to a counter on the north side of the floor, that I began to meet Mr. Delano daily, and once or twice a day. The last year, I was given a counter nearer where Mr. Delano had his desk, and dealing with the goods, which Mr. Delano was interested in. He began then to pay me frequent attention. I tried all I could to avoid him, without offending him, for I wished to keep my place. I had heard a great many stories about him, and the girls at the store who had disappeared, and that it was fatal to any girl to whom he would take a liking; but I thought, as many women and girls do, that it was their own fault.

"But the fatal day came to me, the morning I accepted an invitation from him, to go with a party of girls from the store, and one of the managers, and himself, to Coney Island. I want to state here, gentlemen, that I did not know at that time that Mr. Delano was a married man. It seems strange with all the stories whispered about him, and his gallantries to young women, that it was never mentioned that he had a wife and family, that is, in my hearing." She drew herself up, and with head and shoulders thrown back, her arms outstretched, her

color coming and going, her voice like a flute echoing in every corner and cranny of that large courtroom, she told the story of that night, forcibly, dramatically. She described the scene the morning after in old Waite's office, so graphically, that several gentlemen rose from their seats, and drew near to hear better, and as they did, they drew from their pockets their handkerchiefs, to wipe their eyes.

"Yes, gentlemen," she said, "that man, old enough to be my father, whom I ran from the night before to protect my innocence, could find no other dagger to thrust into my young heart, than to accuse me of immorality. The man these accusations were made to that morning sits here in this courtroom, although having a daughter of his own, in his callous heart, there lurks no pity for such as I. The four years that have passed, has not softened it, one iota for the poor daughters of poor men. At the coroner's inquest, he told with the cold-bloodedness of a clam, that I was dismissed from his establishment on the charge of immorality, knowing in his heart, it was false as hell.

"I was carried from that room in a dead swoon, by two women, and a man, to a room, kept for the sudden illness of the women employees. About four hours later, I had recovered sufficiently to rise and dress and steal out. I wandered about the streets for hours, I would not go home, for as the electric wire flashes thought, thousands of miles in a few moments, so that charge had been conveyed to every man and woman, in that establishment of nearly two thousand employees, before I left that room; and by the next day, to every similar establishment in New York City. Although in every one of them are hundreds of men and women, living immoral lives, the majority of women, forced into it, by just such men as Delano. And even if I got a position, which I doubt if I could, having the ill-will of the head men, I would be tabooed and ticketed, a victim of every man who happened to admire me.

"Go home, never—go home to mother, to my proud but poor mother. No woman, if she sat on a throne, could have reared me more carefully or instilled prin-

ciples of honesty, truth, and virtue, more than she. Go home to Gene, with that dagger still in my heart, that no hand could pull out, or stop the blood which flowed from its wound; for there are wounds of the soul, the spirit, which nothing but time and God, can heal. Go home to Gene, honest, manly Gene, the noble boy companion of my childhood? Never. Gene, to think I had deceived him, for I had been out the night before, and though innocent as a babe, things and appearances were against me. No, with that accusation laid against me, I could not go home. I could not bear it; my whole proud woman's nature, revolted at the thought. Gentlemen, I have a quick intellect; during the hours I wandered about, my mind was busy, and by midnight I found myself, standing in front of that same dark house, which the night before I would not enter with Delano.

"I was just passing out of my nineteenth year, but I was stricken old, oh, so old," and she pressed both hands on her bosom. "And there under the shining stars of heaven," and she raised her arms above her head, "I swore, that never would Roscoe Delano, send me to the street, where he had sent so many young women. While I knew he had done the most unprincipled things, I never dreamed he would resort to such base treachery. I knew that Delano would visit that house before morning, and in a few moments its door had opened and closed upon me. I will not go over the scene between Delano and myself, for as the door closed upon me, it must close upon what transpired there, between him and myself, but this, I outwitted Delano. The streets were before me, the slums, the gutter. That great City, lying outside offered me nothing else. I was homeless, penniless, though innocent; I had no name, it was smirched, and blotted out that morning, by a black lie. Before I left that house, I had, under a promise, which has thrown its pall over my life, I had in my hand a check, for a large sum of money." A great cheer, burst from the audience, and every man and woman, rose to their feet. Nina turned deadly pale, and came near fainting, she realized she had made a mistake.

"Gentlemen," she continued, recovering herself, "you

misunderstand me, I am here on trial for my life. The newspapers, have reported all kinds of false stories about me; I owe the jury, and the world the truth, and they shall have the truth, and nothing but the truth. You must not think that this money, in any way, assuaged my suffering, the humiliation, and degradation, I had been subjected to. All the millions in the world, could not return me to my mother, and to Gene, the fair, innocent, happy girl, I was the night before. Like a rose stung in the bud, it may open into full leaf, and bloom, but the blight is there, the worm gnaws at the heart, and it dies, before it reaches maturity.

“ My time here has been short, I rallied, and for a day, spread my wings to the sun, but like a wounded bird, which tries to soar again, the hurt was deadly, the span of my life is run. After that night, Delano and I were strangers, so far as any relationship existed between us. I deny that I ever was his mistress; he followed me to my flat up-town, and to all his appeals, his protestations of love, I turned a deaf ear; I was like stone. Every time he came I begged and plead with him, to leave me, to go out of my life, and stop his persecution. All that time I hated him, loathed him; in my just wrath and righteous indignation, I could at that time, have slayed him in his tracks. He had a strange, unaccountable infatuation for me, and the only thing I could do, was to let him come and go. I hoped in time this mad passion, would die of starvation.

“ When I came into my long-delayed inheritance, and moved into my house, he followed me there. So long as he did not interfere with my liberty, I let him come and go. I offered to pay him back the money he gave me, if he would only leave me, and go his way, and let me go mine. Suffice it to say, that from the time I first knew him, until the night the unknown assassin struck him down, in my house, before my eyes, I never had felt more pity for him. And now I want to say to the judge and jury, to his wife and family, that this hand of mine,” and she raised it up, “ never laid a straw in Roscoe Delano’s path, never harmed a hair of his head, never by word, or act, did I plan or plot to hurt him, never.

"I hoped and have prayed, that a merciful and kind God, in His own good time, and in His own way, would remove him out of my life; until He did, I would bow to the inevitable. Gentlemen, I have told you all; I have spoken the truth, and nothing but the truth, and now I leave myself to your mercy, and justice." A deadly pallor overspread her face, as she finished the last sentence. Bertram and Gene were at her side, before others could reach her. She held out a hand to both, and in the midst of great excitement, and cheering, they led her to a seat, where Jeanette, Madame Deveraux, Mrs. Marstan, her mother, and Madame Sloan, all gathered about her.

Then a silence like the grave fell over the courtroom again, as Mrs. Delano was seen to rise; she begged the ear of the Court. "I wish to say, that so far as I am concerned, I would like the judge and jury, to show the mercy, and justice, to Miss Palermo, which she has asked for. I myself, withdraw all charges of her having anything to do with the killing of my husband, Delano, and think it unnecessary to prosecute the case farther." The whole audience, judge, and jurors, rose to their feet, and cheer after cheer, rang out, and went up; young men, and old men, waved their hats, and the women their handkerchiefs, until the judge requested silence. When the people were restored to quiet, he spoke a few brief words to the jury. When he finished, whispers ran down the aisle of the twelve men, then the foreman, rose and said in a clear, distinct voice, "We, the jury, proclaim with one accord, Miss Nina Palermo, the prisoner, not guilty. And we further exonerate her from all conspiracy, and knowledge, beforehand in the killing of Roscoe Delano."

When the foreman finished I looked towards Nina. She had fainted and fallen back in her chair, in a dead swoon. I rose and rushed to where she sat. Immediately Boyington, who seemed to always be in the right place when wanted, and as quick as a cat, when jumping on a mouse, ran for some stimulants, but the cheering of the audience kept up. Boyington was back in a second,

and we soon brought her to. I saw then the only way to do, was to get her out of the stifling courtroom.

In five minutes I was out, and back with two carriages, and in a little while, we were all downstairs. Nina, Madame Sloan, her mother, Gene, all weeping, were driven to Mrs. Lunis's apartments, where first my eyes rested on Nina Palermo, then in all the fresh bloom of happy, innocent girlhood. I waited to see my lady into her carriage, also Jeanette, her mother, and De Coute. It was late when Bertram and myself, after seeing to the ladies, and bidding good-by to Morrison Siles, and the other men, who were all rejoicing over the verdict, parted, he to follow on after he had dined with his mother, and sister, and De Coute. I jumped into a carriage and was driven to the Lunis's apartments, as I knew I was one of themselves and a participator in their griefs and joys, and would be a welcome guest.

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE AVENGED YOU AND AVENGED MYSELF.

Around and about Eighth Street and Washington Square, there are many small, narrow streets, running off Sixth Avenue, Seventh Avenue, and Eighth, with long, tall rows of tenement houses, crowded with men, women, and children. In about the middle of these streets, the rows of houses separate, leaving here, and there, small alleyways about the width of a door between, which lead to other houses, in the rear, tall, dark tenements, crowded with humanity. I, Beverly Osgood, will now carry the reader out of the small, crowded street of C—, through one of these alleyways, to a high, old rickety tenement house, in the rear.

The night is very cold, one of those January nights in New York City, when a fellow leaves the warmth of his room, and strikes the air outside, thinks that cold, icy fingers, clutch at his lungs, and for a second almost

strangle him. Snow had laid upon the ground for four weeks, and the thermometer stood just at zero, sometimes ranging a little below. We will enter the door, in the center of this building, a dim light burns in the lower dingy hall, and climb up the bare narrow stairway, to the fifth floor, and enter the first door in the hall, at the head of the stairs. The room is small, but very clean, its bare floor scrubbed white, with a few strips of rag carpet, laid here and there. One strip was spread before a little cook-stove, where a hard coal fire burned, giving out comfortable warmth. A few chairs, a washstand, a cupboard, a plain deal table, upon which a lamp burned, covered with a porcelain shade, that threw out softened light over the room, and over some plates, cups, and saucers, which stood upon it, made up its furnishing. A kettle steamed upon the stove, and a small teapot stood upon the fender.

Upon a bed, in one corner, lay a woman dying; she was about thirty years of age. Had Jeanette Arlington stood near that bed, at the first glance of the face, she would have taken oath, that Mrs. Leroy Johnathan lay upon it, or her wraith. But had Nina stood by it, she would have wept, to see the handsome Nellie Thare, who had left the floor of the dry-goods department house of ——, the first year she herself came to that fatal establishment, and of whom there was much whispering about, when she went home one night, and never returned. She would have wept, to see her lying there such a wreck of her old beautiful self.

Yes, in health, she was the image of Mrs. Leroy Johnathan. The same reddish-gold hair, the same blue, sparkling eyes, the vivacious mouth, and expressive features, the perfectly moulded figure, only where Mrs. Leroy Johnathan depended much on art for her beauty, Nellie's was natural. But now disease, dissipation, baffled ambition, and revenge gnawing at her heart, had done its work.

The mother of the young woman, sits beside her bed; she has toiled up the long road of nearly sixty years, her sparse, gray hair, is combed back in bands from her deeply seamed forehead, and sunken eyes of blue, which

were in youth, bright and sparkling like her daughter's, but now looking like dried wells, which had no more tears to shed. The set mouth, the hollow, wrinkled cheek, curving into the strong chin. The whole face, resembled an image, carved from stone, with eyes, all alive, aflame, and burning with pain. Her large hands, furrowed with toil, the nails worn to the quick, are crossed upon her lap. Hands which have rubbed over the washtub, for thirty-five years, to rear and educate her daughter, now dying. Poor hands, how deserving they were of rest, poor foolish mother, how much blame for your disappointments, and the sorrow graven on your face, is not for me to say, here, but there are ten thousand mothers like you.

Like most women of her kind, she had a drunken, brutal husband, but thanks to Providence he died, in a few years after the birth of the little Nellie. And at her birth, there was a new joy, a new hope, and a great love, born in her heart. A love which Mrs. Thare carried as she stood over the washtub, day, by day, for years, excepting when she was doing the fine ironing, which made her lady customers exclaim, as they lifted their white starched clothes, from the basket, "Did any one ever see such lovely laundered clothes?" And as she worked, Nellie grew, and waxed strong in health, and beauty, in the mother's eyes. Yes, Nellie should have a good education, and with her intelligence and beauty, she would some day, make a good match, and as most mothers of her kind do, she educated the girl far beyond her station in life.

Nellie passed through the highschool, and at the age of seventeen, she was given a position in the large house. She was then like a picture, and as she grew older, there was a grace, and a dash, about her, with almost a perfect taste in dress, that attracted the admiration of all the women, as well as the men. Her salary was fair, and she had her mother rent a little flat, all to themselves, where they moved, Nellie taking great pains to furnish it, so she might have a place to receive her gentlemen company, and every day she grew handsomer, and gayer. When about twenty years old, there came a man, to visit

her, whom her mother had much, and many misgivings about. He came frequently and accompanied the girl out to parties, outings on the lakes, and theatres, and he lavished presents of fine jewelry and clothing upon her.

She told her mother, she was engaged to marry the gentleman, when the old soul, with a sad, worn face, remonstrated with her. Still, after a while the poor simple mother, believed it, so did the foolish, vain girl, not knowing that the man had already a wife, and two children. The months went by, and Mrs. Thare wondered at her daughter's extravagance, but Nellie was so clever, and so good to her. She brought home her salary every week, and put the money into her hands, but there came a day, that Miss Thare came home, from that shop, pale, haggard, determined, with set mouth, and a gleam in her eye, which the mother never saw there before.

She threw herself on the bed, and said she was sick; she laid upon that bed for a week, when one morning she rose and dressed herself, then told her mother the whole story, who the man was, who had been visiting her for months, that he was one of the head managers of the house, where she was employed, and his name was Roscoe Delano. The girl then went from bad to worse in a life of gaiety, and dissipation, the poor mother looking on horrified, and heartbroken at her daughter's conduct.

During these days, there was one person who brought a ray of hope to Mrs. Thare. A young workman, a plumber by trade, the son of a widow, who lived on the third floor of the same house, his mother and Mrs. Thare having been life-long friends. Austin Hartman, a boy five years older than Nellie, had been in love with her for years; but while Nellie smiled upon him, and would chat with him, in her gay, light way, and allow him once in awhile, to take her out, she gave him no further encouragement. In the meantime, Austin's mother died, and Nellie began to droop. She took a severe cold which settled on her lungs, and the young fellow became more attentive to her, urging his marriage with her, so that he might have a better right to take care of her.

But to all his entreaties she turned a deaf ear, saying she was not good enough for him, that he deserved a better girl than her. As her health grew worse, she became more quiet, and taciturn, speaking but little to her mother, but always pleasant and gentle. For nearly a year, she had but one thought, one idea, and how to accomplish it; she lived and fed upon it, until it absorbed her whole being. She would remain in the house all day, until about nine in the evening, or later, waiting for her mother to retire. After she was safe in bed, and sound asleep, she would then rise, wrap herself in a long dark waterproof cloak, drawing the hood up over her head, and face, and steal out. I think Austin had been partially led into the secret, but never dreamed of its finale. For three years, she had hunted and tracked Roscoe Delano, until she located him, at the Countess's house, on West 80—S—Street, which was about a year before the shooting.

Here she watched for him, and learned that he came every night, at about the same hour. Not wishing to attract the attention of the night watchman, she had to keep moving, and often missed her opportunity by a hair's breadth. As her health declined, and she grew weaker, she made up her mind regardless of consequences to do her work, and so it happened on the night of Nina's first 'At Home,' of the season. The girl, doing her own detective work, knew when Nina left home, and when she returned. She knew Nina, and some of her story, she knew that Nina was to have company on this evening, and she made up her mind to kill Delano, either before he entered the house, or she would follow him up the steps, and do her deadly work on the threshold. She had tracked him to the house, but he reached the door too quickly, and seeing that her aim was not good, she paused a second, on the lower stone step. Observing that he did not close the front door after him, quick as a cat, and with steps stealthy as a panther's, she was up and in the door, and concealed behind one of the hangings, in the drawing-room. Intent and bent upon one object, she watched every move of Delano's until he rose to drink the company's health.

She had leaned over to take deadly aim, when the portière brushed aside the hood of her cloak; then it was that De Coute caught a glimpse of her profile. She saw that she was detected by him, and for an instant her hand trembled, misdirecting the first shot, but quick as lightning, the other two were levelled straight, and with determined, deadly aim, at the heart of Roscoe Delano. No bird could have flown out of that house, and down the steps, quicker, or more noiselessly, than she. When she reached her room, she awakened her mother. "Thank God, mother, the thing is done," she said in a stifled voice, "I have rid the earth of a villain, a libertine, a monster, the destroyer and slayer of innocent young girls, and now I am willing to give up my life for it. Rise, mother, go to Austin's room, and call him, tell him to come quickly here to me, I have something to give him."

"Oh, dear, dear, Nellie, what ha' ye ben a-doin'? Oh, my girlie, my daughter, me dear, ye ha' sure mad."

"Go mother, quickly, I want to lie down, I am very ill."

Mrs. Thare rose and obeyed her daughter, mechanically, and went to the young man's room, and called him. He rose and came at her summons.

"Take this Austin, destroy it," said the young woman, handing him a pistol, "you are avenged, I am avenged. Like Charlotte Corday did with 'Muarat,' I have rid the earth of a monster. A great weight has been lifted from me, I can now die in rest and peace."

And from that night on, until this January evening, when we find her dying, Nellie Thare never rose from her bed. Austin Hartman asked her no questions, he understood all; he carried the pistol to his room, and locked it in an old German trunk of his father's, and from that night, until this, he never slackened in his attentions to the dying woman, and her mother.

The rent was paid by him, and everything she and her mother had to eat, and drink, and keep warm by, was furnished by him. And as he sat by her bedside of evenings, when he returned from work, holding her hand, he knew then, she was all his, if not in life, at least in

death. And they were the happiest moments he knew and perhaps the most peaceful to the young woman.

"What is it, Nellie, dear," and Mrs. Thare bent over and laid her ear closer to the lips of her daughter, to hear better.

"What time is it?"

"It's early yet, dear, Austin will be here soon, here he is now." Nellie raises her large, sunken blue eyes, and smiles faintly, as Austin enters the door, and walks on tiptoe to her bedside. She reaches out her thin, wasted hand, and gropes for something in the bed. "Here's the letter, Austin, you will take it to the gentleman, after I am gone, so that he will know—you understand. He took me for some other woman, that night, in the trial he stated this woman was well known to him, an old acquaintance of his. You will give him the letter, and bring him here after I am dead, so that she will not be blamed, and perhaps suffer for my act."

"Every wish of yours will be carried out by me, dear," and the young man, bent over her, and took her hand in his.

"And you will care a little for mother, Austin, when I am laid to rest; I'm sure you will, you have been so true, so faithful, and good to both mother and myself. Poor mother, I have been a bad disobedient daughter, and have broken your heart. Forgive me, mother, forgive me, Austin dear. Did Mr. Archer say he would come again this evening to pray with me?"

"Yes, dear Nellie."

"Turn me over, mother, mother dear, on my side."

Mother and son, for the young man had acted the part of a son to her, they turned her upon her side, and thus the handsome Nellie Thare, the slayer of Roscoe Delano, died.

And Austin Hartman carried the letter written by himself, at the dictation of Nellie, and signed by her, to De Coute, and brought him to the room to view the remains. As he turned away, he said to her mother, that she was the image of the woman he supposed fired the shot, but far more beautiful.

That same evening, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Johnathan,

arrived in Paris, France; after a few days, they settled themselves in elegant apartments in the suburbs. It had been found on looking over the books of the firm of which Bertram's father was the principal owner of all the stocks, bonds, and other investments, that Mr. Leroy Johnathan had been appropriating the money of the firm, for four years. On the day he sailed for Paris, he drew from the bank a hundred thousand dollars in cash, it was not discovered until he was safe on Gallic shores.

CHAPTER VI.

DEAREST, DEAREST, I LOVE YOU.

I lingered on in New York, through the winter, undecided whether to take up my abode permanently in the city or not. Still I was not idle, I read much, and did considerable reportorial work, besides my weekly contribution to the Sunday Bugle. I was passing through a school, in which I was laying up a mental store for future use. I also visited the Lunis's two or three times a week, but generally in the evenings.

After Nina's release from prison, she was very ill, five or six weeks, she had a slow intermittent fever, which seemed to baffle her physician for a time in breaking. He called it a prison fever. The second floor above Mrs. Lunis happened to be vacated during the trial, Mrs. Lunis, thought it a good plan to rent these apartments. for the present, as her quarters were too small for the addition to her family, they would be just what Nina would need. Madame Sloan could then have her room, near Nina, Madame Sloan and Gene, went to the big house on West 80—S.— Street, and selected a few rugs, portières, a few pictures, bric-a-brac, and also furniture suitable for the rooms, and made her as comfortable as possible, until she would recover her health. And in

the interim Gene, and Bertram, would be looking about for a suitable place to purchase. Besides it was very cold and they could not think of moving until spring, until Nina had fully recovered.

The joy and delight of Gene, his mother, and Madame Sloan, at having her free, and restored to them again, knew no bounds, this with the relief that the man, who had been the nightmare of her and their lives, was removed forever from the earth, the hope born of a new future, gladdened their hearts. Yes she was young, strong, both in body and in mind, and she would soon be well again. And of winter evenings, as she lay in the little parlor, upon her couch, with its drapery, and pillows, of rich Oriental stuffs, her long white wool gown, her dark hair, combed back from her blue-veined brow, the large dark eyes, shining, with the light, of the deeper mysteries of the soul, revealed to those who have drank of the bitter cup. Her face sweeter in its sadness, in that something indefinable, which can be known and felt, but which is beyond words to explain as she smiled and chatted with Gene, Bertram, Madame Sloan, her mother, and myself, sitting about her couch, while the fire burned brightly in the grate; and we all came to love her more than ever before. Emma Cowen often dropped in for half an hour or so, and enlivened us with her sparkling original shop talk. "You have found I was right Mr. Osgood," she said, one evening after the trial, "I told you that the beautiful Countess Palermo, was none other than Nina Palermo." She gave a ringing laugh, and took a graceful pose. She was one of those willowy women, who could not be awkward if she tried.

Bertram came every evening, the scenes of the past six months, and his faithful and constant attention to Nina, his tireless devotion in her behalf during her imprisonment and trial, had changed the whole man, into another being. There was an expression of relief upon his face, something which had oppressed him, which I observed the day I first called upon him, in his office, after four years, had fallen away. And in its place a light, of expectancy, of happiness to be, shone in his

eyes; a hope long deferred, now to be realized of a life with her he loved so dearly so well; a great love, which he had proved to the letter. A love which made him brave public opinion, his father's black frowns, his mother's cold face, and colder words, as he stood before them straight and tall, one morning in the library at Anlace. It was the day before the trial, he had come down from New York, not satisfied with his sister Jeanette's kindness to Nina, to beg his father and mother to show themselves at the court, to help him, and help a wronged and innocent girl, who on the morrow was to be tried for her life.

"Surely my son, my only son, you are not going to marry this Countess, who the whole country is talking about, accused of a terrible crime, of murder, whether guilty or not guilty," he raised his hand up to silence her, then folded his arms, across his breast.

"She is not guilty mother," he replied with a pale face, and in a voice, stern and cold as her own, "all I ask is that you, and father, will suspend judgment, until after the trial, and let her see that you are her friends. But no matter what the verdict may be, I shall never marry any other woman but the Countess Palermo." He turned away and left them standing in the room.

He looked upon her lingering convalescence as a natural result of what she had passed through, in the last five years, until the denouement of the drama in the tragedy. Like Hamlet's ghost, Delano haunted the girl, and she could find no hiding place from him, until the awful shooting down of the man, before her eyes. The suspicion of his killing, falling like a black pall over her, her months in prison, and the trial for her life, all had its effect upon her nerves, and fine-strung organization.

Just as soon as her nerves grew strong, which would take time, she would be all right. Then he would show the world that Delano's death with all its attendant scandal had no weight with him. He would marry her any day she was ready, any moment she would say, and in the warmth of his love and devotion she would grow strong, and be her own proud, queenly self again. And day in and day out he longed for the hour to come, when

he made his way to the tenement house on 20—F—Street, and there every evening he was found seated by her couch, after unfolding the box of fresh fruit or hot-house flowers which he carried under his arm.

It was always a box of something, until one evening he stood unwrapping the tin foil from about the rare roses, and she looked up and smiled in his face, and called him her Santa Claus. It was a smile which told him something which he had guessed, but did not dare to hope was true. Then in about an hour Gene, Madame Sloan, her mother would gather in the parlor for the evening. There had grown up a friendship between Gene and Bertram, born of that higher love, which should be rightfully man's, for it is his inheritance, for both men loved the woman who lay for a while upon the shore of the border land, whose rivers and mountains we must climb to the gates of gold, and Gene with a brave spirit said one day to his mother, "If she is only spared to us mother, I will willingly give her to Mr. Arlington; I shall be happy just to love her and you, mother."

Some evenings Chester Harding called and sat an hour or so with her, and she enjoyed his visit greatly, and so did Morrison Siles, and nothing could exceed his gentleness, and kindness, his fatherly feeling, and love for her, which was mixed with great delicacy. He would sit beside her couch and say, "It was beastly weather, but when the spring came she would grow strong. Of course they would have to get her out in the fresh air, among the trees and flowers, and where she would have a sweep of the blue sky, and the purple hills, then she would pick up fast.

"In the meantime she must forget the past. Why my dear child," he said, taking the hand that lay on the couch in his own two, "the whole miserable affair of Delano's death will be all forgotten in a year." She would smile, and speak of something else. He would spend two or three hours with her, talking of different things, the latest paintings, and books, and what he himself was doing, and in his grave way which had a charming touch of humor he would relate to her some of the happenings and gossip of the art and social world, and I

would often drop in and find him there, and later the family would gather in, and we would spend a charming evening. Frank Boyington did not forget her, he called once or twice during the winter so did Chauncey Willis. Oswald de Coute came to bring the story of Nellie Thare. He had her letter published in all the morning papers, which forever set at rest the question of the slayer of Roscoe Delano. Nina said she felt all along it was some one of his many victims who did the deed.

Like Madam Récamier reduced to poverty, when she moved into her little chateau in the suburbs of Paris, her salon of statesmen, noblemen, litterateurs, journalists, and artists, followed her to her humble home. So did Nina's court follow her to her apartments in the tenement house. Jeanette De Coute came up from Malmarda to New York once a week and spent nearly the whole day taking lunch, which Mrs. Lunis served in the little parlor. And not a day passed but my Lady came in the afternoon and remained one or two hours, and Nina, as she lay on her couch, and listened to my Lady, her eyes grew wider, and larger, and she drank deeply of the living water of my Lady's words, the philosophy that Christ taught and proved by His miracles, that spirit, and not matter, is life, force, and power, and the only real power. They opened up a new realm of thought to Nina, and her intellect taught her understanding, and her understanding grasped their meaning, and the Holy Spirit touched her soul, and it drank in the light, and soared to heights unknown to her before, and these were the sweetest, happiest moments Nina ever knew.

Toward the close of March the Lunis's moved into their twelve room cottage; it was a beautiful picturesque house and place, right at the edge of Audubon Park overlooking the Hudson. It stood to the right about a hundred paces from my Lady's mansion, and had about an acre of ground about it for lawn, yard, barn, and out-buildings. All the furniture of the great house on West 80— S.— Street, including paintings, books, bric-a-brac, musical instruments, was moved, Madam Sloan, Gene, and his mother, seeing to the packing and attending to the moving. Emma Cowen, who was given a two weeks

vacation before the spring work began, felt that she would like to spend it with Nina; she was just in time, and to be all alone with her was the acme of bliss to her, she had so much to say to her, but while they had delightful chats together, Mrs. Lunis had warned her that the doctor had forbidden any reference to Delano or his death, or the after scenes. Emma was faithful to the trust reposed in her, and if Nina did happen to refer to anything, she turned the subject. Emma was in every sense equal to her post, her's was a temperament which shook its shoulders at the sad side of life and passed on to the lighter and brighter events.

So by the way of cheering her patient up as she said, she called in her friend John Jacob Astor, Slim Pete. Every day after Jacob ate his dinner, he would bring his tray of candy, and of course John Jacob had to go over his song. The little fellow would touch the bell of the parlor door on the second floor, as gentle as a mouse, and when Emma opened it to him, off would go the hat onto the floor. The hat was now an old slouched cap, he would take two or three tiptoe slides to Nina's couch, hold out his tray of candy, and begin his song in a boyish tenor, that promised a fortune in the future, if ever he were lucky enough to find some maestro to educate it.

“ Fresh car-amels—car-amels—nice car-amels—cent a—piece cent—a—piece.” The first day Emma had him pay a visit to Nina, the boy was so bewildered by the beautiful young woman lying on the couch, and to him, her luxurious surroundings, that he blushed to the roots of his hair; and when he finished his song, and she smiled upon him, and asked Emma to hand her her purse, his gallantry got the better of his love for pennies, and he blurted out: “ I didn't sing, for her to buy, I sing to make tose men, and tose women, dat sits round in parks, tose buy, I sings fer yere to get better. Mrs. Lunis gives me lots of good tings toa eat an' she wants yere toa get better.”

“ Oh, but I like caramels, Jacob, they are a favorite candy of mine, and Nina like myself, bought his whole tray full. Jacob turned to her in his excitement—

“ I'll come agin an' sing for you, but you needn't buy,

no yere needn't" And the little fellow shook his head earnestly, turned, and as quick as a wink, was out of the room, and upstairs to his mother, to tell her all about the lovely sick lady, Mrs. Lunis's daughter, on the second floor.

When the house was ready Nina was carried to her new home, it was then drawing toward the first of May. She had her lounge carried to the wide porch, which faced the east, and overlooked the Hudson. Here as the spring advanced, and the lawn became a carpet of green, and the great trees, budded into bloom, the rosemary hedges sent forth their young shoots, and perfume to the winds, and the banks of the Hudson caught opal tints from the sky. She would lie or sit in her chair of mornings, reading or listening to the birds caroling, and often she would drop her book to watch them flying from tree to tree, and hedge to hedge, with their mouths full of straws and feathers, or other material to build their nests. She came to love nature in these weeks, and found it a book, full of new and wonderful revelations.

"How much we miss, when we live in the gay mad world, of what we call society, where we simply exist to eat, drink, and sleep ; and the chase after what the people call pleasure," she said, one afternoon to Bertram, as he sat by her side. It was drawing toward six in the evening, he had come early, about four in the afternoon, as he did now every day, dining with them and not leaving until late.

"Yes indeed Nina, but it's so hard to make the world believe in its madness, or turn it for a moment from its own self-seeking folly. He bent over her. "There was a time," he continued, placing his arm about her neck, "that I was like other men of my age, and order, that I looked upon women, as other men did, and my love, for them was as other men's love, a selfish carnal passion, and that the woman, I rested my eyes in fancy upon, and desired, was made for my gratification.

"But since I have known and loved you, I am a changed man. Nina when first I met you, I loved the winecup, I was carnal-minded, passionate, and thought in a moderate way, it was my privilege to enjoy these.

I was a sensualist, not in the same degree that Delano was. There is honor, you know among thieves, manly men, and gentlemen, have a high code of honor. But I know now, there is a love, so unlike the love I had for you at first, so far beyond it, in its depths, heights, and purity, that I never dreamed it could exist in the heart of man." He bent over her and drew her closer to his breast. " You will soon be well and strong now, turn your thoughts away, from the past Nina, and live for me. Anything I can do to make you well and happy, command me, and I will obey. We are both young and possessed of all that goes to make life worth living, live Nina, live for my sake."

" Dearest, dearest, I love you," she raised up, laid her head upon his shoulder, and wound her arm about his neck. " I love you, Bertram," she whispered, " love you with the love we have been speaking of. A love whose heights and depths no man or woman can know, only those who like us, came up through great tribulation. I have never loved any man but you Bertram. I love Gene, but it is not the love I bear you; I tell you this so you will understand." He bent over her, kissed her lips, her brow, her eyes.

" Now dearest," she went on, " if I live and marry you, no matter where we go, we shall hear the tragedy of Delano repeated and whispered in our hearing as we pass by. Our children will be told that their mother was in prison, and accused of being his slayer. Do you think you love me sufficient to bear this in the coming future years with me? If not, you will be happier for having known me and my story, for having loved and lost me. Bertram, when I grow strong, the woman, perhaps that you love, the young Countess Palermo, will have died, and there will be born a new woman into new life and strength. She will turn her back on all former things that she used to care for and was ambitious for before, and have now perished with the woman who died. Bertram do you think you can love this woman as you did the former, for another voice calls me, and unless you are willing to follow, you will be unhappy with her."

" Nina, Nina, my love, my life, my wife, I love you.

You are all mine now, and where you lead I will follow, if you will but help me." He drew her closer to his breast, and kissed her again and again. Her head rested on his shoulder, while the day declined, the sun drooped low in the West, and goldened the violet haze upon the hills. The trees stirred by the fragrant May winds, sang gentle lullabys above their heads, and shook their scented blossoms on her couch. The shadows lengthened, and the birds caroled their evening hymn and sealed love's compact.

I must now take the privilege of a seer; perhaps the reader will ask me what of Clarise; I suppose I shall have to let you into my secret. I have been corresponding with her ever since I left New York, nearly five years past, and she long ago has guessed what I have been so reluctant to talk of in these pages, she knows that my first romantic love for her, has been the sweetest memory, the one song that has kept my heart fresh and green, and Clarise responds, but its consumation is in the future. Nina and Bertram were married quietly one day early in June, a few hours later they took the steamer for Europe, where they remained a year, when they returned the great house on 80— S. — Street was sold, and the proceeds went to buy an estate in the country, which she and my Lady turned into a home for women and children.

Every summer the Countess spends a few months at Anlace, the rest of the year she lives in her own house in the Park, having bought a lovely six-room cottage for her mother and Gene, a little farther out, and with more ground about it. Here Gene and his mother live, Madame Sloan spending much of her time between Mrs. Lunis and the Countess. I see Gene employed by Bertram's father, and climbing upward and on, until he comes to be the big real-estate owner, that Nina and he used to dream of, when they were boy and girl. But Gene is one of the salt of the earth, he is a true workman, a socialist, in its highest sense. He believes no man ought to eat, unless he labors, labors with his hands. That there should always be plenty of work for men to do, that it is not true, that over-production is the cause of so many idle men. If men do not earn wages, they

cannot buy food, and clothing, therefore cannot consume so much. That a man is better than a machine, that the earth is his, God-given to him, and he has a right to live in it, and if any man, or body of men, try to deprive him of that right, he must fight to maintain it. Using the great Earl of Warwick's words to Margaret of Anjou, " Rights are but a mockery and a laughter, if they do not justify resistance, whenever and by whomsoever they are invaded and assailed." That any invention of machinery, which goes to enrich the few, and degrade, impoverish, and starve the many, is not a benefit to mankind, but a curse, therefore should be thrown out of the market, as useless. That man was created to live by his craft, and handiwork, and that he is only dignified and ennobled by labor. Carlyle, in his " Past and Present," says in his chapter on " Manchester Insurrections," " The human brain, looking on those sleek, well-fed English horses, refuses to believe such an impossibility for Englishmen." The same can be applied to Americans. This is what Gene believes, and he carries it out in his carpenter shop, on his mothers' cottage grounds, where he works two or three hours every day. He carves and fashions beautiful things with his carpenter tools, to decorate the interior of houses, whose building he superintends.

Every week Nina throws open her house to men of letters, scientists, artists, and ministers of the gospel; all those engaged in helping and leading the human family, to a better and more profitable life. But the sweetest evenings of all to me, are when my Lady, Nina, Mrs. Marstan, myself, and a few others, Bertram now included, also Morrison Siles, who are seekers, gather in my Lady's library, to talk of the higher life, and seek to propound the beautiful Christian philosophy, the wonderful truths which the Saviour taught to men. And Nina is an apt pupil, and a strong ally of my Lady. She whispered to me the other night, that she never knew what it was to live before, that the old Nina had died, her old self, and a new Nina had risen out of the ashes, and she felt as if she could scale the heavens.

But the happiest nights of all, are when my Lady, Nina,

Mrs. Marstan, Gene, and myself, visit the slums, prisons, police-stations, and the wretched dens of vice and poverty, and as we walk along the lighted streets, and pick up here and there a stray waif, homeless and shivering in the cold. The girls and boys, we send to the Home in the country, the women, to the one in the city; here they will have a clean bed, and breakfast free. And Nina, Countess Palermo, whispers to me, "Beverly, I am coming to understand a little of Madame Deveraux's power, for this life is power. When we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, why we, if pure enough, can put the earth under our feet, and hold the planets, in the hollow of our hand."

And I whisper back, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." John, chapter XIV, verse, 12.

THE END.

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